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VOLUME XIII, NUMBER 4 MAY 1958

TILLICH
THE RIDDLE OF INEQUALITY

RUTENBER
PACIFISM: THE CLAIMS OF THE STATE AND THE WITNESS OF THE CHURCH

NELSON
EXISTENTIAL CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

SITTLER
ETHICS AND THE NEW TESTAMENT STYLE

SCHERER
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UNION SEMINARY QUARTERLY REVIEW

TO PROMOTE THOUGHT AND ACTION IN THE SERVICE OF CHRIST

VOLUME XIII, NUMBER 4 MAY 1958

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The Riddle of Inequality

Paul Tillich

"For to him who has will more be given; and from him who has not, even what he has will be taken away." Mark 4: 25

One day a learned colleague called me up and said to me with angry excitement: There is a saying in the New Testament which I consider to be one of the most immoral and unjust statements ever made! And then he started quoting our text: "To him who has will more be given," and his anger increased when he continued: "and from him who has not, even what he has will be taken away." We all, I think, feel offended with him. And we cannot easily ignore the offense by suggesting what *he* suggested—that the words may be due to a misunderstanding of the disciples. It appears at least four times in the gospels with great emphasis. And even more, we can clearly see that the writers of the gospels felt exactly as we do. For them it was a stumbling block, which they tried to interpret in different ways. Probably none of these explanations satisfied them fully, for with this saying of Jesus, we are confronted immediately with the greatest and perhaps most painful riddle of life, that of the inequality of all beings. We certainly cannot hope to solve it when neither the Bible nor any other of the great religions and philosophies was able to do so. But we can do two things: We can show the breadth and the depth of the riddle of inequality and we can try to find a way to live with it, even if it is unsolved.

I.

If we hear the words, "to him who has will more be given," we ask ourselves: What *do* we have? And then we may find that much is given to us in terms of external goods, of friends, of intellectual gifts and even

of a comparatively high moral level of action. So we can expect that more will be given to us, while we must expect that those who are lacking in all that will lose the little they already have. Even further, according to Jesus' parable, the one talent they have will be given to us who have five or ten talents. We shall be richer because they will be poorer. We may cry out against such an injustice. But we cannot deny that life confirms it abundantly. We cannot deny it, but we can ask the question, do we *really* have what we believe we have so that it cannot be taken from us? It is a question full of anxiety, confirmed by a version of our text rendered by Luke. "From him who has not, even what he *thinks* that he has will be taken away." Perhaps our having of those many things is not the kind of having which is increased. Perhaps the having of few things by the poor ones is the kind of having which makes them grow. In the parable of the talents, Jesus confirms this. Those talents which are used, even with a risk of losing them, are those which we really have; those which we try to preserve without using them for growth are those which we do not really have and which are being taken away from us. They slowly disappear, and suddenly we feel that we have lost these talents, perhaps forever.

Let us apply this to our own life, whether it is long or short. In the memory of all of us many things appear which we had without having them and which were taken away from us. Some of them became lost because of the tragic limitations of life; we had to sacrifice them in order to make other things grow. We all were given childish innocence; but innocence cannot be used and increased. The growth of our lives is possible only because we have sacrificed the original gift of innocence. Nevertheless, sometimes there arises in us a melancholy longing for a purity which has been taken from us. We all were given youthful enthusiasm for many things and aims. But this also cannot be used and increased. Most of the objects of our early enthusiasm must be sacrificed for a few, and the few must be approached with soberness. No maturity is possible without this sacrifice. Yet often a melancholy longing for the lost possibilities and enthusiasm takes hold of us. Innocence and youthful enthusiasm: we had them and had them not. Life itself demanded that they were taken from us.

But there are other things which we had and which were taken from us, because we let them go through our own guilt. Some of us had a deep sensitivity for the wonder of life as it is revealed in nature. Slowly under the pressure of work and social life and the lure of cheap pleasures, we lose the wonder of our earlier years when we felt intense joy and the presence of the mystery of life through the freshness of the young day or the glory of the dying day, the majesty of the mountains or the infinity of the sea, a flower breaking through the soil or a young

animal in the perfection of its movements. Perhaps we try to produce such feelings again, but we are empty and do not succeed. We had it and had it not, and it has been taken from us.

Others had the same experience with music, poetry, the great novels and plays. One wanted to devour all of them, one lived in them and created for oneself a life above the daily life. We *had* all this and did not have it; we did not let it grow; our love towards it was not strong enough and so it was taken from us.

Many, especially in this group, remember a time in which the desire to learn to solve the riddles of the universe, to find truth has been the driving force in their lives. They came to college and university, not in order to buy their entrance ticket into the upper middle classes or in order to provide for the preconditions of social and economic success, but they came, driven by the desire for knowledge. They had something and more could have been given to them. But in reality they did not have it. They did not make it grow and so it was taken from them and they finished their academic work in terms of expediency and indifference towards truth. Their love for truth has left them and in some moments they are sick in their hearts because they realize that what they have lost they may never get back.

We all know that any deeper relation to a human being needs watchfulness and growth, otherwise it is taken away from us. And we cannot get it back. This is a form of having and not having which is the root of innumerable human tragedies. We all know about them. And there is another, the most fundamental kind of having and not having—our having and losing God. Perhaps we were rich towards God in our childhood and beyond it. We may remember the moments in which we felt his ultimate presence. We may remember prayers with an overflowing heart, the encounter with the holy in word and music and holy places. We had communication with God; but it was taken from us because we had it and had it not. We did not let it grow, and so it slowly disappeared leaving an empty space. We became unconcerned, cynical, indifferent, not because we doubted about our religious traditions—such doubt belongs to being rich towards God—but because we turned away from that which once concerned us infinitely.

Such thoughts are a first step in approaching the riddle of inequality. Those who have, receive more if they really have it, if they use it and make it grow. And those who have not, lose what they have because they never had it really.

II

But the question of inequality is not yet answered. For one now asks: Why do some receive more than others in the very beginning, before there is even the possibility of using or wasting our talents?

Why does the one servant receive five talents and the other two and the third one? Why is the one born in the slums and the other in a well-to-do suburban family? It does not help to answer that of those to whom much is given much is demanded and little of those to whom little is given. For it is just this inequality of original gifts, internal and external which arouses our question. Why is it given to one human being to gain so much more out of his being human than to another one? Why is so much given to the one that much *can* be asked of him, while to the other one little is given and little *can* be asked? If this question is asked, not only about individual men but also about classes, races and nations, the everlasting question of political inequality arises, and with it the many ways appear in which men have tried to abolish inequality. In every revolution and in every war, the will to solve the riddle of inequality is a driving force. But neither war nor revolution can remove it. Even if we imagine that in an indefinite future most social inequalities are conquered, three things remain: the inequality of talents in body and mind, the inequality created by freedom and destiny, and the fact that all generations before the time of such equality would be excluded from its blessings. This would be the greatest possible inequality! No! In face of one of the deepest and most torturing problems of life, it is unpermittably shallow and foolish to escape into a social dreamland. We have to live now, we have to live this our life, and we must face today the riddle of inequality.

Let us not confuse the riddle of inequality with the fact that each of us is a unique incomparable self. Certainly our being individuals belongs to our dignity as men. It is given to us and must be used and intensified and not drowned in the gray waters of conformity which threaten us today. One should defend every individuality and the uniqueness of every human self. But one should not believe that this is a way of solving the riddle of inequality. Unfortunately, there are social and political reactionaries who use this confusion in order to justify social injustice. They are at least as foolish as the dreamers of a future removal of inequality. Whoever has seen hospitals, prisons, sweat shops, battlefields, houses for the insane, starvation, family tragedies, moral aberrations should be cured from any confusion of the gift of individuality with the riddle of inequality. He should be cured from any feelings of easy consolation.

III.

And now we must make the third step in our attempt to penetrate the riddle of inequality and ask: Why do some use and increase what

was given to them, while others do not, so that it is taken from them? Why does God say to the prophet in our O. T. lesson that the ears and eyes of a nation are made insensible for the divine message.

Is it enough to answer: Because some use their freedom responsibly and do what they ought to do while others fail through their own guilt? Is this answer, which seems so obvious, sufficient? Now let me first say that it *is* sufficient if we apply it to ourselves. Each of us must consider the increase or the loss of what is given to him as a matter of his own responsibility. Our conscience tells us that we cannot put the blame for our losses on anybody or anything else than ourselves.

But if we look at others, this answer is not sufficient. On the contrary: If we applied the judgment which we *must* apply to anyone else we would be like the pharisean in Jesus' parable. You cannot tell somebody who comes to you in distress about himself: Use what has been given to you; for he may come to you just because he is unable to do so! And you cannot tell those who are in despair about what they are: Be something else; for this is just what respair means—the inability of getting rid of oneself. You cannot tell those who did not conquer the destructive influences of their surroundings and were driven into crime and misery that they should have been stronger; for it was just of this strength they had been deprived by heritage or environment. Certainly they all are men, and to all of them freedom is given; but they all are also subject to destiny. It is not up to us to condemn them because they were free, as it is not up to us to excuse them because they were under their destiny. We cannot judge them. And when we judge ourselves, we must be conscious that even this is not the last word, but that we like them are under an ultimate judgment. In it the riddle of inequality is eternally answered. But this answer is not ours. It is our predicament that we must ask. And we ask with an uneasy conscience. Why are they in misery, why not we? Thinking of some who are near to us, we can ask: Are we partly responsible? But even if we are, it does not solve the riddle of inequality. The uneasy conscience asks about the farthest as well as about the nearest: Why they, why not we?

Why has my child, or any of millions and millions of children, died before even having a chance to grow out of infancy? Why is my child, or any child, born feeble-minded or crippled? Why has my friend or relative, or anybody's friend or relative, disintegrated in his mind and lost both his freedom and his destiny? Why has my son or daughter, gifted as I believe with many talents, wasted them and been deprived of them? And why does this happen to any parent at all? Why have this boy's or this girl's creative powers been broken

by a tyrannical father or by a possessive mother?

In all these questions it is not the question of our own misery which we ask. It is not the question: Why has this happened to *me?* It is not the question of Job which God answers by humiliating him and then by elevating him into communion with him. It is not the old and urgent question: Where is the divine justice, where is the divine love towards me? But it is almost the opposite question: Why has this *not* happened to me, why has it happened to the other one, to the innumerable other ones to whom not even the power of Job is given to accept the divine answer? Why—and Jesus has asked the same question—are many called and few elected?

He does not answer; he only states that this is the human predicament. Shall we therefore cease to ask and humbly accept the fact of a divine judgment which condemns most human beings away from the community with him into despair and self-destruction? Can we accept the eternal victory of judgment over love? We cannot; and nobody ever could, even if he preached and threatened in these terms. As long as he could not see himself with complete certainty as eternally rejected, his preaching and threatening would be self-deceiving. And who could see himself eternally rejected?

But if this is not the solution of the riddle of inequality at its deepest level, can we trespass the boundaries of the Christian tradition and listen to those who tell us that this life does not decide about our eternal destiny? There will be occasions in other lives, as our present life is determined by previous ones and what we have achieved or wasted in them. It is a serious doctrine and not completely strange to Christianity. But if we don't know and never will know what each of us has been in the previous or future lives, then it is not really *our* destiny which develops from life to life, but in each life it is the destiny of someone else. This answer aslo does not solve the riddle of inequality.

There is no answer at all if we ask about the temporal and eternal destiny of the single being separated from the destiny of the whole. Only in the unity of all beings in time and eternity can a humanly possible answer to the riddle of inequality be found. *Humanly* possible does not mean an answer which removes the riddle of inequality, but an answer with which we can live.

There is an ultimate unity of all beings, rooted in the divine life from which they come and to which they go. All beings, non-human as well as human, participate in it. And therefore they all participate in each other. We participate in each other's having and we participate in each other's not-having. If we become aware of this unity of all beings, something happens. The fact that others have-not changes in

every moment the character of my having: It undercuts its security, it drives me beyond myself, to understand, to give, to share, to help. The fact that others fall into sin, crime and misery changes the character of the grace which is given to me: It makes me realize my own hidden guilt, it shows to me that those who suffer for their sin and crime, suffer also for me; for I am guilty of their guilt—at least in the desire of my heart—and ought to suffer as they do. The awareness that others who *could* have become fully developed human beings and never *have*, changes my state of full humanity. Their early death, their early or late disintegration, makes my life and my health a continuous risk, a dying which is not yet death, a disintegration which is not yet destruction. In every death which we encounter, something of us dies, in every disease which we encounter, something of us tends to disintegrate.

Can we live with this answer? We can to the degree in which we are liberated from the seclusion within ourselves. But nobody can be liberated from himself unless he is grasped by the power of that which is present in everyone and everything—the eternal from which we come and to which we go, which gives us *to* ourselves and which liberates us *from* ourselves. It is the greatness and the heart of the Christian message that God—as manifest in the Cross of the Christ—participates totally in the dying child, in the condemned criminal, in the disintegrating mind, in the starving one and in him who rejects him. There is no extreme human condition into which the divine presence would not reach. This is what the Cross, the most extreme of all human conditions tells us. The riddle of inequality cannot be solved on the level of our separation from each other. It is eternally solved in the divine participation in all of us and every being. The certainty of the divine participation gives us the courage to stand the riddle of inequality, though finite minds cannot solve it. Amen.

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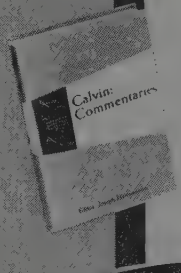

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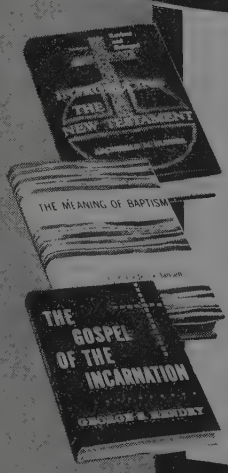

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Pacifism: The Claims of the State and the Witness of the Church

Culvert G. Rutenber

Back in the 17th century, during the conflict between Cromwell and King Charles I, Thomas Fuller prayed, "God put an end unto these woeful days before they put an end to us." No doubt it seemed like a good prayer at the time. But it wasn't half as apt then as it is now. The possibility of the days putting an end to us all in very literalness is precisely the shadow under which we all live.

One would think that under such conditions the rush to pacifism would become a stampede. But it is not so. And some of the reasons for this lie, certainly, in the history of pacifism itself. In their eagerness for peace, pacifists have consistently underestimated the difficulties and overrated the prospects of success. During World War I Maude Royden was certain that if, in the first week of August 1914, the British people had risen up and disarmed the nation, the Kaiser's armies would not have marched in Europe. George Lansbury hastened to assure the International Fellowship of Reconciliation, meeting in those fateful days of 1939, that he had just come from an interview with Hitler and felt sure there was hope, for he had found Hitler not to be such a bad fellow after all. And it was in the spirit of a confident pacifism that an anonymous onlooker wrote on the occasion of the signing of the Kellogg-Briand Peace Treaty in 1928: "The deed cannot be doubted. I saw it done. I heard the words spoken. I looked into the grave faces of the men who were impowered to sign. . . . I read again the unambiguous words of renunciation. I looked at the signatures and seals. I cannot do otherwise than to command my

pen to write these words: Today international war was banished from civilization." (*Peace in their Time*, Robert H. Farrell, p. 219n)

Such naiveté is not to be recommended for the halls of government and statescraft where grave decisions must be made. Indeed such wishful thinking is positively dangerous when the consequences of wrong guessing is communist tyranny. So feels the average nonpacifist. And not without justification. The only trouble is, it is also positively dangerous to play with the matches of nuclear fusion when one miscalculation can ignite the globe. "If", says Gabriel Marcel, "the unimaginable evils which a new world war would bring upon us *were* genuinely imagined, to any extent at all, that new world war would become impossible" (*Mystery of Being*, I, p. 36). It is *this* truth which the Christian nonpacifist has to live with. It is this truth which calls in question the whole rationale which undergirds our military posture.

So let's begin again with another look at pacifism, *Christian* pacifism. The phrase needs clarification, since neither "Christian" nor "pacifism" is without its ambiguity. The word "pacifism" has been stretched at times to include everything from not spanking your children to vegetarianism. Since a common attitude towards war unites all pacifists, the word "pacifism" will be used as equivalent to conscientious objection to war. Christian pacifism is that form of pacifism which takes its motivation and its rationale from the Gospel. The form herein defended will be a *Church-centered* rather than a politics-centered pacifism. The primary orientation will be the Church and its witness rather than the state and its preservation. It is possible that no state in the modern world can be pacifist.* But the Church can—and must. It is the Church, and not the state, that is the bearer of the meaning of history. The state is a provisional organization; the Church is eternal.

I am not trying to suggest an absolute dichotomy between Church and state nor am I proposing a Christ-against-culture approach, with the consequent withdrawal of Christians from the world. Christians must take an active part in the social and political power stuggles of the day. This is basic Christian truth, especially when the Christian finds him-

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*The possibility is not absolutely excluded, but it is interesting that even India makes no pretense of being a pacifist state. Some people even think that a pacifist-state is a contradiction in terms, since power at the service of order is inherent in the nature of the state. To this the reply may be made that submission to a foreign power without a struggle is not the abandonment of order, but the substitution of another form of order for the original. However, it is not necessary to argue this point, since the focus of interest in this essay is not on the state but on the Church.

self a member of a democratic state. But this commitment to political activity is not an absolute. We are not responsible to society. We are responsible to God *on behalf of* society, and sometimes that responsibility can best express itself through sitting on our hands!

What is involved here is the dialectic of Incarnation and Crucifixion as illustrated in the life of our Lord. The Incarnation is God's "Yes" to the world, his identificaiton with its struggles and conflicts. But there is not only an Incarnation. There is a Crucifixion. And if Incarnation is God's "Yes" to the world, Crucifixion is God's "No" to the world. Yet there is no contradiction here. The "Yes" and the "No" are all of a piece, ultimately. God must pronounce his unwavering "No" to the sinful world that now is, for the sake of the redeemed world that will be.

These two moments of the life of our Lord must always be kept in mind by the Church which is his now-body in history. Incarnation symbolizes world-affirmation. The Church of the Incarnation cannot stand aloof from the struggles of men. Its love must seek embodiment in every good work, in every area of life. But there are times when world-affirmation must give way to world-denial (Crucifixion), that the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ may be the more clearly seen.

Now in all of this there is nothing new. Both pacifist and nonpacifist are in theoretical agreement that the Christian cannot give himself to the power struggles of society at all times, by every conceivable method, on every desired occasion. A line has to be drawn, for obedience sake. The difference is that the pacifist draws the line sooner than the nonpacifist. This sounds like a mere matter of degree, but one must not minimize the momentousness of such a matter. Aristotle long ago built a whole system of right and wrong around just such "mere" differences of degree: virtue is the mean of which vice is either too much or too little. Differences in degree can and do become differences in kind.

The grounds on which the pacifist draws his line must now be surveyed. Classically, pacifism has appealed to the sacredness of human life and has taken its stand on the refusal to kill a man. Such a position is not without parallel in the thinking of the pre-Constantine Church. Indeed, it is precisely this ban on killing to which Origen appeals in his answer to Celsus on why Christians do not fight. And Cyprian, bishop of Carthage, wrote: "Christians are not allowed to kill." Nevertheless, I think it is impossible to make an absolute, doctrinaire statement to the effect that a Christian is never permitted to kill a man. It seems clear to me that if a madman were about to blow up a speeding airliner with fifty people on board it would

be better to kill the madman than to let him take the lives of fifty others. Here, if you please, is a problem of the lesser of two evils. But such a concession should never make us forget that it *is* a serious thing to take a man's life for whom Christ gave his. And such a concession should never be stretched to excuse participation in modern war. When slaughter takes place on a mass scale, without any differentiation between guilty and innocent, without any possibility of confining its use to moral limits then the cost of Christian participation is far too great to pay. And the Church which acquiesces in this kind of indiscriminate violence compromises its essential nature as the embodiment (sinful but none the less real) of the love and truth of God, immanent in culture but also transcendent, part of the life of nations, yet essentially transnational, and universal.

When one surveys the history of the last several years, one wonders just where that line is that the Christian nonpacifist is going to draw and in drawing say "Thus far, but no farther." When the pattern of obliteration bombing arose in World War II a moral barrier was breached. The distinction between soldier and civilian was blurred, and defenseless women and children were roasted alive in the holocaust visited on the cities of Germany and Japan. But for the nonpacifist Christian the time to draw the line had not yet come. Then came Nagasaki and Hiroshima, with over 200,000 civilians wiped out with one bomb. But the time to draw the line had not yet come. Instead a line was drawn relative to future wars by the Dun Committee, appointed by the Federal Council of Churches to examine the Christian conscience and war. The Dun Committee reported that atom bombs should not be dropped by the United States first (we had already done so, without warning) and should be used in retaliation "with restraint." The qualifying phrase "with restraint" was soon rendered meaningless by the invention of H-bombs 1000 times more powerful than the original bomb dropped on Japan. But still the time had not come to draw the line. Meanwhile we are entering the era of the intercontinental ballistic missile, which steps up the danger one more notch. A nervous radar-watcher, misinterpreting the meaning of a blip on his screen, can cause the release of a missile which once released cannot be recalled. Global devastation . . . gobal fear . . . genetic damage by radioactivity . . . race suicide . . . and still it is argued the time has not come for the Christian Church to draw the line. It is not clear just what is being waited for!

It is important that we make very plain what we are *not* saying. We are *not* saying that because the Christian Church is the purveyor of the love of God, Christians must renounce all use of force and use love alone. *Such an argument establishes a false antithesis between*

love and force. The two are not opposites. If I violently shove a child out of the way of a speeding car I have expressed my love—through the use of force. And even when we abandon the area where the one against whom the force is used is also the beneficiary of it and move into the area of justice, where the force is applied against one (e.g., a criminal) for the sake of another (e.g., his victim), we have not abandoned the area of love. The use of force and coercion is the price that Christian love must pay for operating relevantly in a sinful world.

What we *are* saying is that not only must sin be taken seriously, but even more important Christ and the gospel must be taken seriously. Not only is sin part of our human story but Christ, too, is part of our human story. And by His death and resurrection He has formed a new creation in history, the Church. This new creation is "a colony of heaven," (Philippians 3:20, Moffatt's trans.), which owes its allegiance to its heavenly homeland and which reflects in its own life and operations the truth and standards of that transcendent Kingdom of God of which it is both the pledge and the imperfect embodiment.

To take Christ and His Gospel seriously in this sense is to acknowledge that there are limits to a Christian's participation in the coercive structures of society. And there are limits to the accommodation which Christian love can make to the concern for "relevance," as the world understands that word. That limit is reached when force which can be controlled for limited ends gives way to uncontrollable, limitless violence. At this point, all talk of justice becomes irrelevant. The "justice" which modern warfare serves is like the justice served by setting fire to a theatre and shooting down every patron who runs for the exits in the certainty that among the victims will be Public Enemy Number One. Such methods are unthinkable. Some things are simply not permitted, however worthy the goal sought.

There are some highly relevant comments by Kierkegaard on this problem. In *Purity of Heart is to Will One Thing* he writes:

> If a man sets himself a goal for his endeavor here in this life, and he fails to reach it, then, in the judgment of eternity, it is quite possible that he may be blameless. Yes, he may even be worthy of praise. He might have been prevented by death, or by an adversity that is beyond his control: in which case he is entirely without blame. He might even have been prevented from reaching the goal just by being unwilling to use any other means than those which the judgment of eternity permits. In which case by his very renunciation of the impatience of passion and the inventions of cleverness, he is even worthy of praise.
>
> If reaching the goal should be the excuse and defense for the use of illicit or questionable means—alas, suppose he should die tomorrow.

> Then the clever one would be caught in his own folly. . . .
>
> To the temporal and earthly passion the end is unconditionally more important than the means. On that very account, it is the passionate one's torment, which if cerried to its height must indeed make him sleepless and then insane, namely that he has no control over time, and that he continually arrives too late, even if it was by merely half an hour. . . .
>
> He whose means are invariably just as important as the end, never comes too late. Eternity is not curious and impatient as to what the outcome in this world of time will be. . . . To earthly and wordly passion, this observation must seem shocking and paralyzing To it conscience must seem the most paralyzing thing of all. For conscience is indeed "a blushing innocent spirit that sets up a tumult in a man's breast and fills him with difficulties" just because to conscience the means are without exception as important as the end.

Our conclusion thus far, then, is that *when force ceases to be used discriminately for limited ends and passes over into indiscriminate violence the Christian must abjure it for conscience sake. Since modern war is of precisely this character, the Christian must renounce it.* I will now attempt to put this thesis to a kind of rough test by showing that the peculiar vocation of the Church is compromised when it does not adopt a pacifist position. The term "peculiar vocation" is used advisedly. There are many activities that Christians share with others—for example, the pursuit of social justice. On the other hand, there are some things that are the peculiar vocation of Christians, which only they can do—e.g., winning men to Christ. My thesis is that the witness of the Christian Church, at the point of its essential vocation, is gravely compromised by its involvement in the war system.

Dr. Frank Woods, upon his enthronement a few months ago as fifth Anglican Archbishop of Australia, remarked that in the eyes of the restless millions of India, the East and Africa, Christianity is not the bearer of good tidings of peace and goodwill but synonymous with a civilization which twice in the last fifty years has been rent by war "more devastating and terrible than any before in history." The countries of the East, he continued, think of Europe as a Christian continent where "unspeakable atrocities, far outstripping in enormity and cruelty the fabulous atrocities of ancient Rome or of modern savages, have been committed." His conclusion was that the peoples of the East have already made up their minds that Christianity is a *Western importation to be resisted.*

If any confirmation of this point of view is needed, a quotation from a prominent Asian Churchman may be pertinent. Writing in the June 1957 issue of *Christus Victor,* Dr. Daisuke Kitagawa notes: In the race of winning the masses in Asia, "Christianity which is so closely identified in Asian minds with the colonial powers of the West,

has a decided disadvantage *vis a vis* communism, for Christianity cannot help being regarded as defending the *status quo*, while communism is regarded as standing for *change*." Speaking further of the feeling of Asians that Christianity's concern with them is primarily to keep them from becoming converts to communism, Dr. Kitagawa continues: "Come to us completely unarmed, save by the Gospel of Christ and in Christ find in us Asians, Christians and non-Christians alike, children of God for whom Christ has died as well as for you."

At the heart of missions is evangelism. What happens to evangelism when it is practiced by a war-supporting Christianity? A friend of mine with the United States Navy asked the Chinese driver of his jinrikisha in Hong Kong what he thought about the problem of peace. The Chinese boy responded in broken English: "Sir, you Americans are a funny lot. You ask me, 'what price does peace come?' and yet you prepare for war. You say you hold the way to peace. This may be so. I have heard of your Christ and *he* may be the way. But this I know" (and his eyes squinted and his fist doubled tight), "Christianity as I know it is *not* the way." In short, a Christianity compromised by its association with the war systems of power states cannot proclaim the Gospel.

But a haunting question remains. What would happen if the Church decided to break with war and the majority of Christians became convinced pacifists? What would be the consequences? Well . . . what *would* be the consequences? And if the reader is typical, what he means when he raises this question in his own mind is, What would happen to America and the West *vis a vis* Communism? The question as so interpreted is not my question. I do not consider, as some do, that my first consideration must be to say something or do something that will aid the statesman in his soul-crushing responsibilities. My first concern is not the state but the Church and to raise the question of consequences is first of all to ask, What would happen to the Church? And here it seems to me the answer is clear. A pacifist-minded Christianity in an ecumenical setting would really *be* the Church, the world-wide fellowship of believers, transcending all man-made boundaries. No longer would Christian be set against Christian as each is caught up in the struggles of the nation-state. No longer would German Christians be found killing for the sake of fascism, nor Russian Christians for the sake of communism, nor American Christians for the sake of democracy. Christians would not be found killing at all. They would no longer be at the disposal of the state as a pawn in international politics. They would have a prior commitment, a commitment to the world-wide brotherhood of believers, to the community of the reconciled and reconciling, of the redeemed

and redeeming, of the peaceful and the peace-making. Such a Church would be released to actualize the ministry of the suffering servant, its essential vocation. Its fate might be to become the martyr-Church, becoming broken bread and poured-out wine for the life of the world. But it would be *the Church*, the veritable body of Christ, the purveyor and embodiment of the truth and love of God.

C. H. Dodd has written that the part of Stoic ethics which deals with the individual Stoic's relation to the state is taken, in New Testament ethics, by injunctions on the individual Christian's relation to the Church. And this squares with our Lord's claim that the Kingdom of God had been taken away from the Old Israel and given to a New Nation, the Israel of God. It is to this New Nation, the People of God, that the primary loyalty of the Christian belongs, *not* to the nation-state.

But the matter is one of both-and and not either-or. And now that the priority of the claims of the Nation of God over all temporal structures has been suggested, we must return to the question, What would happen to my nation if Christians adopted the pacifist position? What would be the political consequences? And the only possible answer is, Who knows? On any calculus of probability it would seem that our government's military posture would be ruined, Russia would win the Cold War, and communism would take over the world. It is a terrible fate to contemplate, yet if the exposition above is correct the risk must be taken. And a risk it is, not a certainty. History is rarely predictable and the lust to play God to historical processes and neatly predict the course of world affairs must not paralyze us into inaction, on the one hand, nor precipitate us into unwise activity on the other. Our job is to be true, and leave the results to God. He is the Lord of history, not us. And His ways are not our ways, nor His thoughts our thoughts. Christian pacifism is a faith, part of the larger faith of the Church universal. Such faith must always appear a stumbling block and scandal to the rationalistic calculator of probabilities. Indeed it must sometimes appear a stumbling block to the Christian himself. But it is nonetheless the mystery by which we live, believing as we do not in events, not in circumstances but in God. And to believe in God is to believe that if we offer to Him our humble and loyal witness, then in ways beyond our knowing He will use that witness to His greater glory and to the forwarding of His inscrutable purposes.

Existential Christian Education

C. Ellis Nelson

There are three ways, yea four, by which a denomination can prepare curriculum materials.

The time-honored way was to search through the Biblical and historical treasures of the church for suitable materials and to arrange them in some logical or theological order for study in church school classes.

After the turn of the century, many denominations modified the traditional pattern by making life situations the organizing principle of curriculum. Thus, authority for method and content was moved to the here-and-now; and in some cases historical content of the Christian faith came under the judgment of the newer social sciences.

More recently, a few denominations have sought to solve the curriculum problem by separating faith from educational psychology. This is a practical solution, for the faith itself is not changed; it is simply appropriated at each age level according to the maturity of the child as suggested by the findings of developmental psychology.

The new curriculum of the Protestant Episcopal Church, called the Seabury Series, cannot be easily categorized; it does not belong in any of the three types described above. Perhaps "existential" is the best generalization that can be made about it. There is little doubt that it is the most original, daring, and internally consistent of denominationally-produced curriculum for Christian education.

The Parish Comes Alive

Whatever else Christian education is, it is local in its application. The child knows nothing of rival theories of Christian education and, indeed, little of other churches or communities. He knows only his

immediate environment, and the experiences in his local church comprise his Christian education. In this sense, good Christian education is always custom-made at the parish level. Like a good sermon, Christian education must speak to, and relate with, the local situation in which people live.

At the national level, denominations can only generalize about the characteristics of age groups, social forces that obtain at any local level, and qualities of lay leadership available for teaching; and they must prepare their curricula in the light of these generalizations knowing that the material does not apply specifically to a certain local church. Indeed, nearly every denominational curricula is loaded with suggestions on "how to use" or "how to adapt" the materials to local situations.

The Seabury Series starts with the reality of the local parish as the only matrix in which significant Christian education can exist. The first of the necessary conditions laid down by this Seabury Series is "an ever widening group of individuals, within the congregation, which is genuinely concerned about the redemptive task of the parish—the task of being a fellowship in which the life-changing impact of the Gospel will be felt." It is required that the teacher be a member of this concerned group in the congregation in order that he can help others understand it and desire its company.

This system of Christian education, therefore, must come alive at the parish level and the first step is a parish workshop. Using a retreat-type meeting, leaders from a parish examine themselves, their parish and the Christian faith so that they may "relate their church school teaching to the redeemed and redeeming life of the parish." *A Parish Workshop in Christian Education* by D. W. Crawford is the guide for the parish as it examines itself for the educational task. A second book, *The Christian Gospel and the Parish Church* by C. D. Keen, interprets parish life as the normal place for the Christian life to be lived in terms of people's relation to each other and to God.

The parish workshop is not a course of study nor a device for promoting the Seabury Series. That a major denomination can withstand both temptations is just short of miraculous in this day of the organization church. Rather, the concerned people in the parish face themselves and their task in their parish. The "content" must come out of their lives. By using data from individual life histories, the group is forced to think through what the parish can and should do with real people who have problems related to the Christian faith. Group dynamics techniques are used in the parish workshop so that participants will begin to understand the emotional as well as the intellectual content of the faith. From understandings developed in

the parish workshop, the leaders can then build a program of Christian education that fits their particular parish.

Start With The Here And Now

The writers of this curriculum say that the newness of it lies in their objective not to teach what others "have already experienced about the Christian faith." The purpose of this curriculum "is to lead pupils to have, along with their teachers, first-hand experiences of the redeeming love of God in the fellowship of the church, and to find, in the recorded experiences of others, an interpretation of what is happening to them."

To do this means that the teacher must first have a thorough knowledge of the characteristics of the age group he is to lead and a first-hand acquaintance with the children in his class. Indeed, the pupil's whole life situation defines and creates the questions to which the faith has an answer. The teacher's manuals therefore, start with a description of the child. Recorded excerpts from teaching situations show the teacher more realistically what children of that age are like.

What takes place in a church school class is entirely dependent upon what the teacher is able to deduce from the general problems facing the children. For example, the teacher's manual for the seventh grade course entitled "Why Should I" shows how a comment by a pupil from his school science class could lead to a discussion of relating natural law to God. The manual also shows how this comment could lead to a discussion of the authority of the Bible, the claims of the Bible concerning the moral law, and finally to a consideration of the Ten Commandments. In fact, the teacher is counselled to be quick to change plans if something like a broken window has a signficant religious problem related to it.

The pupils' reading book, especially in the lower grades, start with the here and now. "Tish and Mike" are children put into situations where they experience loneliness, fear, forgiveness, parental rejection, and the dependability of nature. Children reading these stories identify their emotional condition with Tish and Mike, thus making it easy for parents or teachers to show the child how God will help him with his experiences. Since the religious content is not in the pupils' reading book, he will not get the religious dimension unless it is supplied by an adult.

Look! No Lesson Plans

Under this system no lesson plans can be supplied. The only thing that can be supplied in the teacher's manual is an account of how a

teacher in a parish worked out lessons that fit his situation. These sample lesson plans cannot be followed or imitated; they can only illustrate how the method works. However the teacher has some guidance. Each age level is carefully studied to obtain the typical religious need or interest, and the curriculum is suggested within a general framework. For example, the fourth grade material (for nine-year-olds) is strongly ethical under the title "right or wrong?" because this seems to be the dominant need of most fourth graders. But the teacher's manual quickly points out that the teacher must start where the pupils are, for the child needs to be saved *today*.

A modification of group dynamics is the educational method used throughout, even for adult groups. This method requires small groups with a leader who guides their interaction and an observer who records what is said and who says it.

Group dynamics in this curriculum is a process that leads to redemption. The group is set up so that a person can be himself, find himself in relation to other selves, and express himself in freedom. The idea of a person working through his emotional and religious problems in a group runs strongly through the Seabury Series and relates methods of work normally used in pastoral counselling to the educational work of the church. Not only are cases of individuals used to show the need for Christian faith, but the teaching processes are brought under the case-work method. The teachers' manuals give tape recordings of church school class sessions printed with a wide right-hand margin on which has been noted observations and comments about the teacher's relation to members of the class. This is the same device often used by supervisors in training ministers in pastoral counselling.

The following short excerpt from the eighth grade teacher's manual will illustrate partially the group process as used in the Seabury Series.

Teacher: "This is our seventh class session. If you were to describe this class what would you say?"
Ralph: "Very nice. I liked it. You don't talk about dull subjects."
Jack: "I would say it was very interesting."
Teacher: "We're asking for honest comments."
Molly: "I like it."
Teacher: "The last Sunday we discussed good luck, bad luck, various ways to pass the blame. Interesting to note the number of things and people we blame. On the board here is a list of them."

Doug (reading list): "How can you blame polishing shoes?"

Another: "Yeah, you were the one who said that, Doug, that polishing shoes made you late."

(The discussion continues on all the things they blame their troubles on and then the teacher says: "Are we willing to face up to our own guilt?")

Boy: "No."

Teacher: "Why?"

Ralph: "Because we don't want to face it."

(This leads to reasons why we fix blame on to people or things when our life goes wrong and then to a discussion of atonement and finally a study of Leviticus chapter 16.)*

If the teacher had tried to plan the session in that way it would have fallen flat. It should likewise be noted that the teacher must have an enormous amount of information available at his finger tips in order to utilize free class discussion and relate it to Biblical or historical material. The pupils' reading books, however, have content material, especially from the fourth grade up, which give Biblical, historical, literary and liturgical materials. How much of this material is utilized in church school class is, of course, dependent upon each parish situation and the peculiar conditions that obtain in each class room.

Content Through Worship And Adult Education

The content of the Christian faith is communicated primarily through worship and adult education. Family worship at church is considered one of the essential elements of Christian education and special suggestions are given to the parish for scheduling a family worship early Sunday morning prior to the class discussions. All members of the family are expected to attend the family worship thus making possible a fifty-minute church school period.

The insistence on adult education is one of the unique features of the curriculum. Parent education is a requirement for parishes using the Seabury Series and materials are prepared for their use. These courses are not on child psychology nor are they on social adjustment; rather, they seek to relate the Gospel to fundamental life situations. For example, the manual for parents having children in the first, fourth, and seventh grades suggests that the dicussion be on salvation. This is approached by posing two questions: One, what is man's fundamental need? and Two: from what do we need to be saved? In the light of that discussion it is suggested that the group

*From the Eighth Grade Teacher's Manual, "What About Us?," pp. 66-67. Used by permission of Seabury Press, Greenwich, Connecticut.

do role playing of case studies of human situations in order to deepen and test their understanding of salvation. Finally they are to apply their understanding of salvation to the parish. All parents' manuals interpret the general characteristics of the child's age level and explain the curriculum for that age group. There are no lesson plans for parent classes; they must be worked out according to parish needs.

General adult Christian education was projected first and consisted of six books. These books are for reference and general reading and thus represent a comprehensive outline of the church's tradition, beliefs, and practices. The content of the Christian faith is therefore transmitted through adults who in turn are parents and teachers in the church.

Four Questions

Those of us who have tried to prepare curriculum materials for a denomination know the many hazards and compromises that clutter the path from conception to actuality. Moreover, a curriculum is never completed, for it must be revised in the light of experience as it is used in the church. The Episcopal church, having just completed its projected Seabury Series, has not had time to make major adjustments. This series will probably have difficulty getting well-prepared, versatile and well-balanced teachers, parents who will quickly respond to their obligations of study and worship, and parishes that will reschedule morning worship periods; but these problems will occur with any curriculum. Full parish life, consisting of sacraments, worship, and fellowship, gives a substance to faith locally that cannot be assayed by examination of church school materials; but, in so far as printed curriculum represents Christian education, four questions arise in my mind.

I. Is the group process method the best way to learn? Since it is the methodology about which the whole curriculum is planned, the answer in the Seabury Series is yes. However, doubt can be registered at several points. If we look at life situations with candor, we must conclude that not all situations immediately predicate free discussion. Sometimes the person's problem is too deeply buried for him to know what it is; or if he is dimly aware of his need, he may be defensive about it. Group methods will make for a more permissive environment in which a person can express himself; but the basic relation in which he will express himself will be toward his fellow man. In his experiences he is expected to find and understand God. That this is possible no one will deny. That it is the expected way to find God is questioned. Some people find God in spite of their fellows. Some

Biblical characters were able to give God's words of judgment and mercy by transcending their social environment; indeed it might be suggested that a revelatory exeprience with God, though time and culture conditioned, is essentially a timeless experience.

Proponents of group dynamics insist that the criticism of their method as adjustment-minded is ill-founded. Rather, they say, true individuality can emerge when the self is unfettered, and the device for freeing a person to be himself is guided interaction with others in an atmosphere of acceptance. Under some circumstances this is undoubtedly true, but is it normative enough to established it as the educational method? It seems to me that as an educational method it tends to focus attention on relationships between people, making the people sensitive to personality traits of others, with a reduction of interest in the quality of the ideas being discussed. There is historical evidence to indicate that the group process grew out of American sociology during its "adjustment orientation" period; today some sociologists see positive values in conflict, that is, conflict related realistically to the problems we face. Such a point of view is taken by Coser in his book *The Functions of Social Conflict.*

There is some evidence to indicate that learning is more related to the learner and his personality structure than to any one method of teaching. Jacob in his *Changing Values in College,* after surveying all the studies of various teaching methods, came to the conclusion that no one method seems to be superior. He based his judgment on tests which affected the student's attitudes and value-judgments, finding that some students respond better to one method than to another and that any method can be wrong for some students. The inference is that a teacher must be able to use a variety of methods selected on the basis of the type of pupil, his life situation, and the purpose of the educational experience.

II. Is "local option" adequate? The local parish situation defines, and the local church school class selects, what specific life problems will be discussed. This is why no lesson plans can be outlined for the teacher. As indicated earlier, there is fundamental truth to the contention that what is learned is learned locally. It is another matter, however, to imply that local matters, concerns, interests, and problems, are the main grist for the learning mill. It would seem that one function of education would be to lead beyond the local to the general, to open up areas of awareness and sensitivity to problems that do not always have a clear-cut local dimension. Although the Seabury Series is organized to create a dialogue between local concerns and the Gospel, the group, because the group is directing the educational process,

can spend a disproportionate amount of available time on its immediate concerns. Also, if the local concerns determine the educational experience, how can a group break out of its cultural situation; or to state the matter in another way, how can the students' cultural situation be judged if they are the jury?

III. Is the Church *primarily* a redemptive fellowship? The Seabury curriculum affirms that it is and arranges experiences so that a person can work out his redemption within the Church. The educational process is considered an important element in the process of redemption. Here we touch contrary doctrines of the Church and one can only state his opinion and move on. My understanding is that the Church exists primarily to continue the ministry of Christ, that the Holy Spirit seeks to reduplicate the work of Christ in the Church. In this sense, the Church, like the individual, is always under Christ's leadership and judgment, always under the obligation of obedience.

IV. Is *wholeness* salvation? A major feature of the Seabury Series it its effort to bring about *wholeness* within a person. This conception of salvation as a lifelong process stretching from kindergarten through adult life is a feature of the curriculum. The fears, temptations, opportunities and social problems which engage a person's attention are experiences in which a pupil must find his way. As he receives strength, help, guidance, reassurance, clarity, and courage, he is saved. The curriculum is designed to create conditions under which psychological healing can take place and wholeness can emerge.

Here again we face theological choices and one can simply state his position to show that other points of view are possible. Salvation as wholeness is a concept that has powerful psychological and theological support. Salvation must mean something to a person now in terms of a changed life, a new goal and a more serene spirit. But salvation as wholeness seems to me to be a reaction to static notions of salvation as a state and a positive affinity for psychotherapy. It is more congenial to my mind to think of salvation as doing the will of God. This, of course, presents other problems, but it centers our attention on God and His purposes for man. Psychological wholeness is certainly a by-product of a relationship with God; but, like physical health, it is relative and should be subordinated to one's obedience to the leading of God's spirit. I feel there is a danger of elevating any human good to the normative position of salvation. Rather the motivating force of the Christian life should be a response to the love of God found in the person of Jesus Christ which causes a person to deny himself and seek in every way possible to be a disciple, that is, a learner and follower.

No Conclusion

One cannot help admiring this brilliantly conceived curriculum of the Protestant Episcopal Church. Its strategic approach to the church through the parish life conference and adult education, its insistance on worship as part of Christian nurture, its determination to make Christianity relevant to the students' life at the present time—all are characteristics that set it apart from other curriculum efforts. However, no conclusions can be drawn, for conclusions must come from experience in the life of the church. In the years ahead we shall all be interested in the wisdom which will be accumulated from the use of this new curriculum. David Hunter (UTS '35), Director of the Department of Christian Education of the Protestant Episcopal Church, created evaluative devices in the Seabury Series so that the curriculum can be constantly appraised as it is being used. This unusual feature means that the curriculum will be a living part of the church's work subject to the guidance of the church, thereby guaranteeing that the on-going curriculum process will be an interaction between denominational staff and local churches, rather than unilateral action by 'wisemen in the east.'

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Ethics and the New Testament Style

Joseph Sittler

When in the Pauline literature we confront a vital working out of what the response to God actually was in the Christian community. we become aware that the re-enactment of the Christ-life from below is in fact a tremendous drama of faith. It is not possible to state too strongly that the life of the believer is for Paul the actual invasion of the total personality by the Christ-life. So pervasive and revolutionary is this displacement and bestowal that terms like "influence," "example," "command," and "value" are utterly incapable of even suggesting its power and its vitally re-creating force. The apostle is therefore forced to create for this experienced work of God, done in Christ and actualized in faith, a quite personal vocabulary. Efforts to explicate this life-in-Christ according to philosophical and psychological concepts deliver only a series of generalizations completely inadequate to the facts which inform and ring out of the man's words and works: "For me to live is Christ. . . (Phil. 1:21). . . . if any one is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has passed away, behold, the new has come (II Cor. 5:17) . . . . it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me; and the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me (Gal. 2:20). For you have died, and your life is hid with Christ in God" (Col. 3:3).

In St. Paul's faith-obedience to be "not conformed to this world but be transformed by the renewal of your mind," the commandment of love to God and love to neighbor is transposed in terms of faith. Faith for Paul is the comprehensive term used to designate the life which is the creation of the whole response to the deeds and the commands of God in Christ.

The transposition in the primitive Christian community was not an arbitrary or accidental one. It is required by the reality of the revelation of God in the theater of human history in the form of a man. The content of the revelation is the figure of a man utterly obe-

dient in his life to God who is the active reality of holy love. Any effort to ground and elaborate an ethics for Christian faith must in every situation and generation shake off impatiently the investitures of ethos and habitual piety, and renew, criticize and correct its response at this place of impact.

When, in obedience to this requirement, one seeks for the power of God in Christ, he becomes aware that he stands before a quite new and astounding possibility for human life inwardly achieved, variously expounded, dramatically illustrated in the life of Jesus himself. Faith, love, obedience, joy, hope—these are not separate virtues, qualities, or exhibitions of the fire of the God-relationship for Jesus; they are rather the rich vocabulary of an organic oneness with the Father announcing and doing God's will in the living continuity of obedience.

It is only in the acknowledgment of this organic continuity that the words, works, and commands of Jesus can be understood so as to supply the church both with its elemental Christology and its ethical form, force, and style. Christian ethics, that is to say, are Christological ethics, not in the sense that such ethics are corollaries derived from propositions about Christ, but in the sense that they are faithful re-enactments of that life. In the Sermon on the Mount, there is revealed clearly this obedient life in the bestowed and accepted love of God. The fulfilment and transformation of the entire Old Testament God-relationship is here clearly revealed. Here, as in every teaching, parable, and miracle of Jesus is disclosed a faith active in love which cracks all rabbinical patterns, transcends every statutory solidification of duty, breaks out of all systematic schematizations of the good—and out of the living, perceptive, restorative passion of faith enfolds in its embrace the fluctuant, incalculable, and novel emergents of human life.

The words of the Sermon on the Mount have been and remain an embarrassment to every effort to derive Christian ethics from Jesus according to principles of ethics. The style of speech in these words of Jesus is revelatory of the ground and the living activity of the ethics of faith; hence the nonlegislative character of these utterances, which continue to fascinate the mind with system-disintegrating and disquieting power. These words do not constitute legislation replacing the old which, clearly put forth, can then be actualized by any devout and resolute person. The occasional character of these utterances is the clue to the nonlegal, inexhaustible, principle-transcending intent and power of them. They are like lightning flashes of God's love-gift and command which, here and there, in this instance and now in that, flash over and brilliantly and briefly illuminate the moving sea below. Or, like a gull that flies smoothly over the turbulent sea and then suddenly

in a quick, sure dart swoops down and picks up something out of the waters, resumes its flight and soars on.

These teachings of Jesus are not the legislation of love (the very term contradicts the nature of love), but are rather the paradigms of love. System is proper to the inorganic; the living has a characteristic "style." Jesus in his teachings did not attempt a systematization or exhaustive coverage of all areas of human behavior. He did not, after the manner proper to philosophers of the good, attempt to articulate general principles which, once stated, have then only to be beat out in corollaries applicable to the variety of human life. He speaks rather of God and of man and of the human community in a relational and a living way. On the way, in the course of his speech, he swoops down, now here, now there, picks up some detail, situation, instance of human pathos, error, or pride, holds it up for a moment and then moves on.

This same uncalculated "style" is characteristic of the deeds of Jesus. His words and deeds belong together, for both are signs which seek to fasten our attention upon the single vitality which was the ground and purpose of his life—his God-relationship. His parables, in this sense, are spoken miracles; his miracles are acted parables. His aphorisms are verbal apertures into his mission's meaning. In the fulfilment of this mission, he proceeded through the countryside as a herald, a judge, and a teacher, but also as a healer and a helper. And his healing and his helping have the same gull-like, unanticipated immediacy as his tales. He confronted suffering, physical and mental torment, and regarded it as a characteristic mark of this world; only God's kingdom will show once more the finished creation, untouched by pain. Jesus' cures are not done in the course of a planned mission whose purpose is to cure the ills of as many sick persons as possible. If so, we should expect more cures—more teaching about healing, and a more systematic extension of it throughout the land.

We find nothing of the sort. Rather the pattern is now here, now there! This one he touches, others he does not. His cures do not signify an arbitrary anticipation of this kingdom, which no man knows when God will send. They indicate rather the present and pressing existence of the available power of the kingdom now. They, too, are signs conveying the proclamation, the power, and the promise of the kingdom. They assert and demonstrate that the kingdom is on the way, that God, through the One whom he has sent, has already permitted the splendor of the kingdom to shine out, now here, now there. Now "a certain centurion"—now "by chance a priest was going down that road"—and "behold, there was a man with a withered hand"! The uncontrived, episodic nature of the happenings, the way in which

each is made to glow in the reflected light and show forth the power of God's pressing kingdom, is sufficient indication that they are sparks arching out from a central impact. The kingdom is the power; and these convulsive episodes are its transforming and revivifying works.

The "occasional" character of Jesus' words and works which is asserted to be the point of entrance to the style of the obedient life, may appear to be so fragmentary and fugitive a pattern as to be useless for the requirements of present need and the urgent necessity to articulate a clear duty to the Christian community.

A second objection is that insistence upon the peculiar style of Jesus' life with his repudiation of principles in favor of a vital pattern of response may drive the question "What ought I to do?" so deeply down into the center of Jesus' own life as to destroy clarity by sheer depth and divert from present duties by the very glory of the New Testament portrait. This apprehension discloses a grave possibility, to be sure, and must be confronted. But the more clearly it is confronted, the more certain it is that for evangelical ethics there is no other way. The risk belongs to the glory. The good Samaritan stands there, and cannot be removed or forgotten by an ever-so-understandable desire that we might replace this thundering demonstration of the immediacy of obedient love by a clearer and less disquieting catalogue of duties. Jesus not only told the story of the Samaritan, but added the absolute word that men ought to go out and do likewise. This command in the context of the story grips us, as Sören Kierkegaard says, "closer than a wrestler." And it is precisely within that grip that Jesus did act! He did intervene in the sphere of illness and suffering, and set himself, now here, now there, against the structure and the course of this world. By these occasional lightning flashes and gull-like swoops into concrete situations, he released old captivities and opened up new possibilities for human lives. The kingdom of God "in your midst" was concretely certified by liberations, restoring deeds of love.

The kingdom of God is not a plan, or a program, or a concept, or an idea. It is a force within whose grip every man is caught; a grip never loosened, but rather having its ultimacy illustrated by every moral achievement and approximate obedience. It is a force, a Godly fascination, a veritable *imago Dei* engraved upon man's social history. This recollective fascination, once having flashed over and personally entered into history with its "signs," to which the Gospels bear witness, can never be forgotten. Its announcement and demonstration (the root event of all Christian ethical thinking) that the alienations of human existence in solitude and in society can be healed, and that the lost territory of life in God can be recaptured, guarantees that a

holy possibility for human life will not cease to disturb, and here and there creates new possibilities for it. Uncapturable in a concept, infuriating in its resistance to system, indestructible as a fact of power and a vision of promise, the realization of this life in men's lives is both the burden and the promise of evangelical faith.

If the Christian ethical life is in reality the believer's reenactment of God's action, then it is an absolute necessity of thought that the nature of this eternal drama of gift and response as wholly determining the reactive ethical life be clearly seen. It is here contended that such a perception is hindered when love is made the primary term for its designation. God, to be sure, is love; but it is not possible to pass from the love of God to what is required of men without causing our thought to pass through and come to terms with the "form" in which this love is revealed to men. The form of the revelation demands a transposition in the understanding whereby one understands that love revealed *in this particular form* begets a response, the proper name for which is not love, but faith! In the synoptic Gospels, in the Fourth Gospel, and in the letters of Paul the vocabulary of response points to faith, not to love, as the generative center. Love, to be sure, is what faith does; it is the fulness and flower of faith. But this dare not blind us to the blunt fact that the new situation, of which the New Testament is the witness, is regularly designated *faith*. Peter at Caesarea Phillipi, the centurion whose son was healed, the women in the house of Simon the Pharisee, the primacy of the term faith in Paul's exposition of the invasive progress of the Christ-life, the central role of faith in the Fourth Gospel's account of the career of Jesus—in all of these, the role ascribed to faith is startlingly obvious.

The supreme revelation of God, who is love, is Jesus. But this Jesus as he appears to sense and sight is an historical fact. Neither to men of his own time and place nor to men of any other time and place does his appearance and career guarantee a revelation of God. When, for instance, a disciple asks who Jesus is and what is his ultimate meaning for human life, Jesus himself is quick to declare that "flesh and blood" (that is, the sum total of the humanly possible estimate) "has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven."

The historical form of a revelation of that which is neither born of man nor verifiable by history requires that nothing less than the decision of faith can constitute the form of the response to it. That it to say, the love of God wherewith we are loved can become life in God wherewith we love in the womb of faith.

God and faith belong together as the only possible correlation, given the form of God's revelation in an historical figure and deed. The structure of theology, in which faith is the determinant in all things

from the doctrine of God to the doctrine of the good (ethics), arises from this controlling fact: that all gifts from God to man are given in and pass through the historical; and the historical, *qua historical*, can never beget life, certainty, redemption. The historical form of God's redemptive deed compels the faithful form of man's response. No one in the history of Christian thought has seen this more deeply or permitted it more utterly to determine his life and thought as a Christian than Luther, who says:

"Faith is of things which do not appear. Therefore, that there may be room for faith, it is necessary that all things which are to be believed should be hidden. They cannot, however, be hidden more remotely than under their contrary object, sense, and experience. Thus, when God makes us alive he does it by killing us; when he justifies us he does it by making us guilty; when he carries us up to heaven he does it by leading us down to hell." (Weimar edition of Luther's works, 18, 633)

There are two reasons why this fundamental fact of biblically witnessed revelation has got to fight its way through to us who, within the tradition of the Reformers, might be expected to be more easily permeable to it. First is the fact that the situation in which Luther and the Reformers articulated the centrality of faith has tended to imprison the meaning of the term within the situation of the sixteenth century. When faith, that is to say, is understood exclusively in terms of an alternative to works, it is both reduced and intellectualized. It is reduced because it is imprisoned within soteriology and there effectually stifled, so that it may fail to exercise its creative power throughout the whole of the Christian ethical life. And, second, the assertion that the just shall live by *faith* means also that by faith the just shall *live!* The entire ethical dynamics of this affirmation is intellectualized when its vitality is transposed into theological propositions which are then trusted to win the mind's assent.

Both of these tragic developments have characterized post-Reformation theology and have clouded the perception that a Christian can only live his life by virtue of the same gift in which he has his life. If a man is restored to God when he accepts what God gives (faith), then his restored life must be lived out in faith. If faith is the comprehensive term for the God-relationship of the believer, then faith must be the comprehensive term for the life-relationship and activity of the believer. If a believer has a "new being" in faith in Christ, then his entire new "existence" is empowered by the same gift.

The believer is commanded to love, to be sure, but this love is formed in faith, just as the love of God who is in heaven is communicated in the faith-demanding historical deed of Jesus. The continuity

of the love wherewith we are loved and the love we are commanded to exercise passes through the passion of faith. Only in this way can the revelation of God's love for man and this loved-man's love for his fellow man be made clear and persuasive. For faith alone can rescue from nonsense the command to love. Nothing is more certain than that love cannot be commanded. If love nevertheless *is* commanded by Jesus, then some life-transforming new relationship in virtue of which the absurdity is overcome must exist. And precisely such a convulsive event in the God-relationship is the central declaration of the gospel. "In this is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us . . ." Faith is here presented as a function of the love of God; it is a term descriptive of how man, now that God has taken the initiative, can be newly related to him. This biblical meaning of faith is totally obscured if the term is filled from below with materials taken from man's spiritual possibilities as these are historically manifested in man's general religious quest.

It was the experience of the holy particularity and the transforming power of this Godly love that inwardly shaped the literature of the New Testament. This love of God calls and draws men to its adoration and service. As the New Testament unfolds, we see that faith is the name given that surrendering obedience-from-below which permits itself henceforth to have its life fashioned by this given love of God from above. The ultimate form of the giving, a death on the cross, is so contradictory and hidden a way for God to bestow his gift that faith alone is a response adequate to it. Love and faith are not, in the New Testament, alternative or opposing terms. Faith is the name for the new God-relationship whereby the will of God who himself establishes the relationship is made actual. And that will is love. Faith active in love is alone faith, and love is the function of faith horizontally just as prayer is the function of faith vertically.

When the God-relationship is centrally informed by faith, then the actual situation of decision-pressed man is saved from the despair which would inevitably overtake him if this relationship were simply compounded of love. For love, no matter how deeply accepted from God, obediently directed toward men, firmly held to as the motivation of action, both reveals and compels the acceptance of pragmatic choices, all possible variations of which are fraught with inadequacy, pain, and denial. In this sense, love is the tutor of faith! The "law of love" no less than the law of Moses is a schoolmaster who leads the believer to Christ. For in Christ the believing lover of men-in-Christ now stands with his Lord and Supreme Lover precisely in his crucifixion! "I am crucified with Christ" is a term not only expressive of the Christian recapitulation of the Christ-life in the large, but a symbol

of the inner content of numberless ethical decisions in their actual heartbreaking character. An evangelical ethics must, therefore, work where love reveals need. It must do this work in faith which comes from God and not as accumulating achievements to present to God. In this working it must seek limited objectives without apology, and support failure without despair. It can accept ambiguity without lassitude, and seek justice without identifying justice and love.

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Exodus At Jerusalem

Paul E. Scherer

Prayer: Grant us, O God, to hear Thy voice, and in hearing it both to love what Thou dost command and by Thy grace to do it; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

The Old Testament lesson this morning, Exodus 33:12-23, is a scene lifted straight out of a story about the exodus from Egypt: while the New Testament lesson, Luke's account of the Transfiguration of our Lord, speaks rather of an exodus at Jerusalem. "Behold, there talked with him two men, which were Moses and Elias: who . . . spake," the KJV says, "of his decease"; but the word is "exodus" really—"who spake of the exodus which he should accomplish at Jerusalem". So much of what Luke sets down, a touch here, a stroke there, sends the mind back—the "glory" in which Moses and Elijah are said to have appeared, like the pillar of fire by night; the cloud, that overshadowed the disciples; the tabernacles Peter wanted to build: one reminiscence after another of those days in the wilderness when a nation of fugitive slaves set out on its long trek toward the land of promise. And that theme runs through the Bible from beginning to end, history, prophets, psalms, gospels—there are half a dozen references to it in the first few chapters of Matthew alone. Until after a while as you read you begin to suspect that it is the central theme of the whole human epic; precisely this deliverance, genuine and vast, which keeps repeating itself, yet somehow never seems really to come off, not quite; not even when Easter shall have added itself to Good Friday!

Let's take up our position then, deliberately. We shall not be standing in either the Old Testament or the New. We shall be looking back from this moment of our lives *through* the New *at* the Old. If we are to take history with any seriousness at all, there's nothing else we can do. We shall be looking back through the exodus at Jerusalem, the death of a lonely man on a cross, by whom, Paul writes, and by his resurrection, God "hath delivered us from the power of darkness and hath translated

us into the kingdom of His dear Son"—back through that, as if it were a lens, at the exodus from Egypt. Together they spell out the drama of our lives.

To begin with there is the Word of Command—in every generation; it's the Bible's first answer to the riddle of human existence: "Speak unto the children of Israel, that they go forward". Of course, back there on the way out of Egypt, the odds were impossible. They always are. We have to be very clear on that score. What is so disconcerting is that "the children of Israel" never seemed to get the odds located in the right place! Their prophets did, but they didn't! "Forward" seemed like a good word, with Pharaoh's host behind them; it was a sensible order. The only trouble was that the sea was in front of them! Pretty bad, wasn't it? They thought so! And without once having it occur to them what the real hazard was! Not the host behind them, or the sea in front of them; not even the wilderness that was to stretch out around them for forty years. The odds they thought were impossible, weren't! They themselves were the odds! They were the reason why only two of them got through! But that hazard they took no account of; just went on, century after long century, not to be awed by God's wrath, not to be won by His love: until the covenant He had made with them hung by the thread of a solitary life; and they snapped that on Calvary, with their own bare hands!

But you can't finish anything until God calls it finished. Soon there was the sound of running feet, and you could hear people singing in the strangest places. If you had asked them why, they would have told you there in prison that they were free, as they never had been free in all their lives. It was something to sing about! While here, and there, and far away yonder men and women were setting off down the years toward the promise, like streams flowing into a mighty river; and where they went the face of the world was no longer sad!—partly because the odds were clearer at last! Never mind the Roman Empire, with its legions, and its arenas: you couldn't stop God with that! But what was more, you couldn't stop Him with this enormity inside the human soul—did you see it on Calvary?—intent on going its own way, blind, and deaf, and dumb; and if ever God should molest it, ready to turn and rend Him. They knew now that nothing would come of that either, because nothing could finish off what God had not finished!

Can't we then at least begin by getting the odds located? Two elderly ladies who had been here one Sunday morning were overheard afterwards as they sat at a soda-fountain complaining that altogether too much had been said about sin. I scarcely know where they could go nowadays to get away from the sound of it. It's in *The Dark at the Top of the Stairs*, it's in *Endgame*, with that meaningless litter of ash-cans

in an empty lot, it's in *Long Day's Journey into Night*, it's in *West Side Story*, and *Peyton Place;* in Faulkner it is "sex and death and damnation"—a gleam of light, maybe, on the horizon, but under a leaden sky is the falling spire of a little Negro church to show what it is that's going on! The danger doesn't lie in understanding what the odds are and where; the danger lies in thinking there aren't any!—except the mess we're in—and so striding about with a thumb in each arm-hole, as if nothing were the matter underneath it all, and we could manage all right, give us time. You say that just now nobody could possibly be so silly: everybody's scared to death! But how many are scared to death about the right things? To look *around*, in a world like ours, and grow pale is sheer nonsense; it always has been. Not because dreadful things can't happen—they can and do; but because there is a word of command, which is God's word, and it starts out by writing the dreadful things as a footnote; will write them so even in our time, when a hammer and some nails are a little naive, and we have to reckon with the stench of battle-fields, and crumpled bodies, and frightened, homeless millions, and nuclear weapons, and slums, and Negroes shoved out of the way, and all the comfortable damned that look on and do nothing! Every man of us with his Egypt and the odds against breaking away from it are *inside* odds, not *outside!* What else does the cross mean, and in the shadow of it now this word still: "Speak unto the children of Israel that they go forward".

But the Bible has a second answer to the riddle of human existence. It says more than that God is in control. That could be cold comfort! It says unequivocally what the novelist and the dramatist never explore —that no situation is hopeless precisely because in no situation is anybody ever helpless! "My presence shall go with thee." Nothing less could keep any of it from being ridiculous! So does the drama move from the Word of Command to the Word of Promise. Only—only there is a Veil over it!

You remember how it was. Moses said, "Show me thy glory". And the Lord answered him: "Thou canst not see my face; for there shall no man see me and live". I suppose because the freedom which makes us men would wither and die at the sight! But the Lord said, "Behold, there is a place by me, and thou shalt stand upon a rock". So God set Moses there, in a crevice, covered over with His hand, and caused all His goodness to pass by, that one might see, so to speak, only His footprints, only the mercy and the long-suffering and the truth where He had been! Is that enough for you: the Promise, "My presence shall go with thee", and the Veil over it, "Thou canst not see my face"?

What God has done, when you come down to it, is no doubt the only evidence we'll ever have of what He is, and of what He's doing now!

But He has done such strange things that when the evidence is all in, it troubles me; because there is more in it than the one-sided sweetness and light which I'd like it to be! It says more than one thing, and I begin to wonder if I can risk having Him around! We have to catch that theme too: it is here, and it runs with the other all through the Bible! There's a wonderful passage in Ezekiel that starts out dreadfully with a threat. Away in exile with his people, the meaning of the past came home to the prophet: into the void of those desolate years stepped first an Enemy! "When I bring the sword upon a land, . . . if the watchman see the sword come and blow not the trumpet, and any person be taken away in his iniquity, then will I require his blood at the watchman's hand." German blood, English blood, French blood, American blood—O God, how much of it there is! Whose head is it on? "Woe", cried the Voice: "the sick have ye not strenghtened, neither have ye bound up that which was broken, nor brought again that which was driven away, nor sought that which was lost." Out to the very edge strode the Enemy! Then turned, and His face was the face of a Friend! See Him now, somehow He will do it, retracing our loveless steps, from the end out yonder back, from the very farthest home again! "Behold, I, even I, will seek that which was lost, and bring again that which was driven away, and bind up that which was broken, and strengthen that which was sick." First the Void, then the Enemy; only after that the Friend! "And I will make them, and the place round about my hill, a blessing."

It's a strange God who goes with us, rooting out and pulling down to build and plant again, wrath and loving kindness! "I will not go up in the midst of thee", He had said to Moses—"for thou art a stiff-necked people". He was afraid to get too close, lest He consume them in the way. But Moses had besought Him saying, "Then carry us not up hence". It was better, far better, to run the risk of being burned to a cinder by that holiness than to be abandoned by it, without the difference it would make between you and all the people on the face of the earth! So the Lord said, "My presence shall go with thee". Better that way, never mind the risk!—more terrible now for its tenderness on the lips of one who got himself into the midst of the worst, very man of very man, and fought it out, until he could seal the mystery of it with the sign of the cross, and the scars in his hands and feet, "Very God of Very God": "Lo, I am with you alway!" It was the Promise again, with only this to make it different: that here at last in one unvanquished human life anybody may see where God has been, the long-suffering and the truth, and how they come out on the top of a hill into that same dreadful steadiness which contradicts us here even as our hearts yearn toward him—yet keeps beckoning to us, that we may be found of him

in every one of his judgments by some mercy that seeks us out, and in every mercy by some judgment that will not leave us alone!

The Word of Command, "Speak to the children of Israel, that they go forward", is the Bible's first answer to the riddle of my being here. Then the Word of Promise: "My presence shall go with thee"—and the Veil over it, "Thou canst not see my face." Nothing now but the human face of Jesus! That's the Bible's second answer. The third is more even than that, once you locate the odds where they are, inside of you: the third answer is a Word of Victory already won, if you can bear it, and square your shoulders under it, in the knowledge that nobody's life is shut out from it except by his own choice. I say "if you can bear it", because it works itself out sometimes into painful patterns.

Pär Lagerkvist, the Swedish poet, who won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1951, has set down in a little novel called *Barabbas* the story of how painful the issue may be. You remember Barabbas, the robber they swapped for Jesus, and how he looked on later that morning at the Crucifixion and was haunted by that face—a face so strong that only in weakness could it have its way. It haunted him in the copper mines where he was sent so soon after. It haunted him in the years that followed, over in Nero's Rome. Until at last he made up his mind to help, as he thought, the Savior of these Christians to set the whole of that odious world on fire—and so was farthest away from Christ when he was sure he was nearest! They arrested him and crucified him with the others they had caught, but over there to one side, by himself, because they knew he did not really belong. The metal disc he wore carried on its face the symbol of Christ; but the symbol had a line cut through it, canceling it. So, over there alone, he waited for the sunset and for the death that he had always feared. As it drew near he was heard to whisper into the darkness, as if he were addressing the night: "To Thee I deliver up my soul". But you are quite convinced that it wasn't to the darkness he was speaking at all, or to the night: he had remembered that too from Calvary! What a pattern it was for the Promise to take: "This day have I brought thee up out of the land of Egypt". And we find ourselves listening once more to a man crowded with his disciples into a narrow room on a dead-end street, saying quietly in the face of measureless defeat, while the ghost of that Fear which had stalked them there began its chattering at the door, "Be of good cheer; I have overcome the world."

Why do we go on expecting the issue to be simple and clear-cut, looking for the kind of assurance a man can never find—certainly not anywhere in himself! We live on the narrow edge, a cat-walk, between confidence and misgiving, doubt and faith, between seeing and not seeing.

Some of you may recall that moving sermon—it has been pronounced one of the best in literature—toward the end of William Faulkner's *The Sound and the Fury*, where you almost come to think that some kind of faith, even if it is a tale told by an idiot, will turn out to be the only thing that makes sense. The visiting Negro preacher, in his "shabby alpaca coat", stands in the pulpit, one arm resting on the reading desk. His voice with its nameless pathos seems to consume him, until men's hearts are "speaking to one another . . . beyond the need of words". "I see it, Brethren, I see it, the blasting, blinding sight! I see Calvary, with the sacred trees, the thief and the murderer and the least of these. I hear the boasting and the bragging, the weeping and the turned away face of God . . . Then what is it I see? I see the resurrection and the light, and the meek Jesus saying, I died that they who believe might live again. Brethren, O brethren!" After that you turn the page, and the vision fades, and Faulkner lays all the problems back in your lap!

And he's right! This far, at any rate: that there's a kind of confidence a man dare not rest even in God—if he thinks he can have it as his own. There is no blessed assurance that Jesus is mine. There is something better than that: it is the disturbance that comes of being his! John Donne got it into his devotions. "I have a bed of sin—a grave of sin. Where Lazarus was for four days I have been for fifty years. Why dost Thou not call me, O Lord, with a loud voice, as Thou didst call him? I need Thy thunder, O my God; thy music will not serve me!" Said a friend to me once, "I can't take it any longer, this beating back and forth between what God wants and what I am. Why can't I give up and be myself?" Then back he went, every day he lived choosing the hurt of the battle! Facing out toward the wilderness and the God whose own job has never gone as it should either; but it bears His signature now!

So, every step of the way, it's the irreversible story of the Exodus—from Egypt to Jerusalem to this moment in your life and mine: the venture into a freedom which doesn't quite come off, because we are the odds against it; "Speak to the children of Israel that they go forward"; with the promise, "My presence shall go with thee"—but the Veil is over it, "Thou canst not see my face"; then the Victory, for all who can bear it—it never has depended on anybody's being sure of it: "Be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." Can you live with facts like that, shoving and pushing at one another everywhere you turn? Maybe it's more important to ask if you can live without them!

Let us pray. O God, Who didst send Thy Son, that he who by a tree once overcame might likewise by a Tree be overcome, speak Thou in Christ Thy word to us, and in him go with us to Thy triumph. Amen.

Worship in an Urban Parish

George E. Todd

The East Harlem Protestant Parish is located in a heavily populated neighborhood on the upper east side of New York City. The population of this low-income parish of tenement houses and public housing projects comes from a varied background including substantial numbers of Negroes, Puerto Ricans, and European immigrants.

Studies of the community ten years ago showed that in the lower section of East Harlem, where approximately 40,000 people live, most of the poulation was not actively related to any church. At that time there were no Protestant churches existing in this lower corner of East Harlem. In the summer of 1948, three students graduating from Union Seminary were provided with funds by four denominations, to seek means of bringing into being a Protestant congregation within this area of the city. Their commission was not to go to East Harlem as carriers of the charity of Christian church members to people with many kinds of needs. Rather, they were commissioned to plant the Church in an area where tens of thousands of persons were not members of any church and where Christ was not being proclaimed as Lord.

Their task was to preach the Gospel in such a way that men and women, young people, and children would be called to be worshipping and witnessing members of the Body of Christ. People of East Harlem were to be called as brothers and sisters into full fellowship with those who were members of the denominations sending these missionaries into East Harlem.

During the ten years of the work of The East Harlem Protestant Parish, worship has been the central characteristic of the life and witness of our mission. In this article I should like to describe some of the forms our worship has taken.

I

Members of the Group Ministry of our Parish have been ordained in the Congregational, Presbyterian, Methodist, Baptist, Mennonite, and

Reformed Churches. Most of us came to our work in East Harlem as recent seminary graduates, and were little experienced as ministers of the Church. We came with some experience and knowldge of the Reformed and Free Church traditions in worship. However, the environment of urban decay and a population of persons long unrelated to any church had considerable influence on the ways of worship in our Parish. We have from the start attempted to discover modes of worship that would be appropriate expressions of the experience and growing faith of the members of our new churches.

We have been fortunate in the very great freedom given to us in our ministry by the denominations to which we belong, and by the denominations which sponsor our work in East Harlem. The administrative board, made up of home missions executives of eight denominations along with representatives of Union Seminary, the Protestant Council of the City of New York, and the New York City Mission Society, has discussed periodically the issues and questions raised by our interdenominational character. Each time this has been discussed, the board has affirmed its conviction that the values in presenting a united Protestant witness in an unchurched community outweighs whatever loss there might be in fuller communication of denominational emphasis. At the same time we have tried to remain faithful to our ordinations and our denominations both in our ministry here and in our participation in the life of our denomination in the city through Associations, Presbyteries, and Conferences.

Because of our own isolation in a non-christian community, we as members of the Group Ministry early felt some kind of worship discipline to be required. Along with other disciplines, we have undertaken something that we variously call a religious discipline, or the worship discipline. Under this order we undertake to prepare and follow a lectionary of daily Bible readings. This is prepared by the wives of two of the ministers. It is now used widely by members of our Parish churches. The lectionary contains suggestions for private devotions and often gives suggestions for the worship in the home. Under the religious discipline we obligated ourselves to meet together as a staff for worship on Sunday morning before the beginning of our week's work. As churches have become established, this time is now a time for a weekly Parish service of Holy Communion, at which members of the Group Ministry are obligated to be present. At our homes, which are scattered throughout the neighborhood, we have in some plainly visible place a Cross or Crucifix, an open Bible, and candles. We meet once a week for Bible study together, and several times during the year have retreats for prayer, Bible study, and evaluation and planning.

We have felt that this kind of mutual encouragement in the life of worship has been essential to keep us from going stale and from becoming frustrated in the midst of the demands of our day-to-day work. I should emphasize that our wives participate in the disciplines of the Group Ministry, and that family worship is an important part of our retreats together. Under a vocational discipline we engage in mutual intercession for the work and personal needs and problems of our fellow ministers.

II

The actual work of evangelism in our Parish began when three ministers and their families moved into a heavily populated block in East Harlem. Simply participating in the life of the community as residents and through working with children in the vacation church school, we were provided opportunity for making contact with the people of the community. Most important, however, was the engagement in systematic calling from door to door through the buildings of a block. The callers told people, "We are here starting a church and we want you to know about it. We wonder if you would be interested." In buildings where some interest was shown, meetings were called. A family would offer its apartment for such a gathering. We would invite the other families in the building to attend. These were very informal meetings at which there was prayer, Bible study, and discussion of at least one of the problems of the community and discussion of some of the problems that some of the people at the meeting had. At each meeting there was an effort to come to some decision in the light of the Bible about what the people in the room could do themselves about at least one of the problems discussed. The problems of housing, health, sanitation, schools, relationships to ploice, family tension, juvenile delinquency, were discussed in the light of God's demand for justice among men, of Christ's call to concern for neighbor, and of God's gift of redemption through Christ, giving power to men to live as citizens of God's Kingdom.

Holy Communion was often celebrated at these meetings in the tenement apartments. Perhaps somewhat romantically we called these meetings Agapé meal groups. They recalled to us, and we wanted them to recapture, something of the spirit of the *love feasts* described in the New Testament, at which Christians gathered for a common meal to remember their Lord and to pray for His return among them in power. Usually only light refreshments were served at these meetings during the discussions. The Holy Spirit moved among us at these Agapé meal groups. People who lived on the same floors in the same buildings met for the first time. Problems were shared, God's Word was heard,

and intercessions were raised up in spontaneous prayers as well as through the use of liturgical prayers.

These small house meetings have continued to be an important part of the worship life of our Parish. Today such groups are being formed in the buildings of newly-opened public housing projects. They have served in older housing projects as means through which mothers with large families, or persons with severe problems, or with great shame and guilt have felt free to participate in worship and Bible study. Sometimes such groups have sprung up around a particular problem and have met for a time to work together in ameliorating some condition under which they suffered or which was affecting the neighborhood. Several of the deacons of our churches now are leading or assisting in such house worship groups.

As the Agapé meal groups developed after several months, a store was rented as a chapel for the Parish. This small store became the church building of the Parish. Immediately liturgical questions became more pressing than they had been. The worship in the house meetings could be very informal and spontaneous, but in a church building there were questions of decoration, of liturgical appointments, of vestments, and of order of service. The store-front building provides extraordinary opportunity for witness to those outside of the Church through the shape and physical proximity of the building itself. It is the kind of a building that people are used to coming in and out of, and through the front plate-glass windows whatever goes on inside can be plainly seen by those on the street. We have tried to make store-front churches places of order and beauty in the midst of disorganized, dirty, and run-down blocks. Simplicity and strength in color and design have been the guiding principles in the decorations. Crosses and communion tables made by members of the congregation have been the principal furniture of worship. The actual service for an ordinary Sunday in the year has grown over a period of time to obtain meaningful components of liturgical and free elements. The importance of participation and action, of involvement, is obvious for worship among persons with little education and with little experience in the realms of ideational and verbal communication (especially in theological realms). Elements of worship involving music, involving what can be seen, and involving active participation of voice and body have been very significant.

The order of service begins with a call to worship and invocation which is usually a responsive invocation of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. This is followed by a hymn of praise. After this opening action the people bow for silent confession, followed by unison prayer of confession. One of the ministers has paraphrased a traditional prayer

of confession, putting it into contemporary English. Some of the prayers and responses are printed also in Spanish in our Parish hymnal. The kyrié, said responsively, follows the confession. After the kyrié and prayer of absolution, the congregation says together the Twenty-Third Psalm as words of assurance of God's grace. I am continually moved when I hear a fervent affirmation, "The Lord is my Shepherd, *I shall not want,*" made by a congregation of persons facing daily problems of insufficient food, clothing, and shelter. The Lord's Prayer, sometimes sung, ends this part of the service.

At this point the minister leaves what would be a chancel of a traditionally built church and stands among the congregation for the part of the service called "The Concerns of The Church." Members of the congregation stand to bring to the attention of the church, events and crises in the life of the community or the wider world outside the Church. Special tasks of witness on the part of individuals or of the congregation are mentioned and commended to the congregation for participation and prayer. Sometimes persons or groups are commissioned for particular undertakings or projects, or individuals or groups are blessed in some new undertaking. The first day of school, the Sunday before Election Day, the opening of a new housing project, a stabbing in a gang fight, an unjust eviction, or some national dilemma or catastrophe might be among the concerns of the church.

Following these concerns of the church for the world there is a time when the personal concerns of the congregation are mentioned. Members of a congregation arise to ask for prayers for themselves or others who are sick or in trouble or facing temptation. Prayers of thanksgving are also asked for special blessings enjoyed, such as birthdays or new jobs or the finding of an apartment or the recovery of health.

This period of sharing is followed by prayers. Prayer is led by the minister, but opportunity is given to members of the congregation to offer their prayers as well, in their own language, if there are any who care to do so. Returning to the chancel the minister kneels for prayer. The congregation bows or kneels.

The Bible rests open on the Table. After prayers the minister lifts up the Bible and carries it to a pulpit or lecturn where the Scripture is read. Often the Scripture is read in English and in Spanish. Sometimes laymen read the Scripture lesson for the day. Occasionally, if the lesson is a story, the minister or a member of the congregation will tell the story instead of reading it from the Bible. The sermon follows the reading of the Scripture. Preaching is most often exposition of a Biblical text. It is our feeling that preaching in an urban setting does not so much require special language and techniques of communication to a special kind of audience as it does faithful Bible study coupled

with a strong grounding in and knowledge of the Scriptures. As far as language and content go, I think the sermons the ministers of our Parish preach would be the same sermons they would preach anywhere except for some differences in illustrative material taken from our common life. Although we continually affirm the importance of preaching in the communication of the Gospel and the calling into being of the Church, yet the quality of much of our preaching and the time given to preparation very often would seem to belie this affirmation. I think we have yet to discover in our Parish what power, able, dedicated, and consistent preaching might have in leading those who participate in our services to fuller worship and witness.

The offering is a time when the invitation to church membership is given. Each Sunday opportunity is given for people to offer their lives to Christ through joining His Church. In the words before the offering and in the prayer dedicating the offering we remember not only the gifts which are given in this service for the work of the Church, but see the offering as a time when all God has given us—all our life and work—is to be offered unto God that He might give it back to us with His blessing to be used according to His will.

The service ends with the saying of the Apostles' Creed or a declaration of purpose and a hymn of fellowship. Members of the Parish have adopted as a Statement of Purpose Jesus' words from Luke 4: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the Gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those that are oppressed, to proclaim a year when men may find acceptance with the Lord." This statement is not seen simply as an exhortation to perform these obligations, but as a proclamation of the Good News that the acceptable time is *now*, and that the Church has been given power to show this forth.

During the hymn of fellowship, perhaps "Blest Be the Tie That Binds," or "In Christ There is No East or West," the minister moves among the congregation, shaking hands with the people. The people in turn shake hands with those nearest them, saying "God bless you," or "God be with you," or other Christian greetings as a sign of our brotherhood in Christ. Before the benediction the Bible is returned to the table. The congregation sings "Amen," and the candles are extinguished at the end of the service.

III

Adequate musical expression has been a continuing problem in our worship. For persons who have been outside the Church the language and the music of some of our most popular and traditional hymns seem

to be inadequate vehicles for expression of prayer and praise and dedication. Musical training in the schools is meagre and inadequate. Spontaneous singing is mostly confined to imitation of what is heard on television, radio, and the popular records. Use of spirituals and some gospel songs have been more popular but still are not thoroughly adequate. Six years ago we published a hymnbook for use in our Parish. This collection was a gathering together of the things that seemed best for our use at the time. It includes some traditional hymns, some spirituals, and some gospel songs, as well as some words written in our Parish and set to well-known tunes. After six years of use we recognize this book to be, for the most part, inadequate for the musical expression desirable in Christian worship; but, except for a few very popular hymns, we are not very clear about this very important aspect of worship. Perhaps one problem has been that we have not been able to recruit any professional musical help, either instrumental or vocal, during our entire life as a church here.*

The sacraments of Baptism and Communion, the characteristic worship of Christendom, have been the most important ways among us of dramatizing and making real the Gospel story. The church members come and stand around the table during Communion so that the action may be clearly seen and intimately participated in together.

We take a loaf—a whole loaf of bread—give thanks, bless it, then break it. We take a cup, give thanks, bless it, and from a pitcher pour out wine into a cup. "This is my body *broken* for you. This is my blood in the new covenant which is *poured out* for many unto unto the remission of sins." Thus do we "show for the Lord's death until He comes. This *breaking* and this *pouring out* becomes for us the reenactment and the experience of our redemption trhough Christ whom we crucified, and yet who is living and present in our Holy Communion.

At the Holy Table we are fed and given new life to continue our worship through the offering of our souls and bodies, all our life and work in the world, to God for his continuing judgment and redemption of mankind. Our poor, inadequate, unhealthy, ignorant, and sinful lives are given back to us as new Life blessed and powerful.

Likewise, in the drama of Holy Baptism, the sacredness of individual human life, because of God's creation of it and His longing for its re-

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*One recent experience with music took place in a service of worship for youth. We used the Kyrie, Gloria, Agnus Dei, Nicene Creed, and The Lord's Prayer set to popular tunes by a London priest, who was worried about the same problem. This gained a hearty participation from the youth in singing the liturgy. If this is a way of getting the words of the Nicene Creed into the hearts and minds of young people, I am all for it. However, I maintain some doubts as to whether this music is a fit offering to God.

demption, is made plain. Parents learn that the children who may not have been wanted in the first place, or who, at best, are considered an additional burden, are persons created by God in His image, are loved and valued and sustained by Him, and have infinite possibilities for the fulfillment of God's gracious will in their lives.

Out of concern for the dramatic and visual elements of worship, we have considered clerical vestments to be important. At first color and drama—a desire to make worship an experience visually exciting and set apart—led to the design of a rather bizarre bright blue vestment with gold decorations. It was felt that the traditional Protestant black robe, adapted and descended from the academic gown, carried little value in communicating the vitality of Christian worship. Soon, however, the gaudier robes were discarded for a more conservative compromise. For a number of years our vestments have been a Geneva gown colored gray to match the gray workshirts we wear with clerical collar in our daily work. Over these robes we wear stoles colored according to the seasons of the Church Year. The hope is that these robes lend dignity to the service of worship while symbolizing the continuity between worship and work.

IV

Observance of the Church Year, both the traditional liturgical outline and some of the more recently-appointed days, has become an important means among us for communication, and celebration, of the events of our Faith. Chief occasions observed are: *Advent*, with use of the Advent wreath in church school, in services of worship, and in the homes of Parishioners. *Christmas*, with Christmas Eve Communion and a pageant of the Christmas story. (The Christmas story has been given a contemporary setting written by a talented author working with some of our members.) *Epiphany*, celebrated by a Fiesta of the Three Kings planned by our Puerto Rican members. Events during Epiphany such as Brotherhood Week and Race Relations Sunday emphasize the manifestation of Christ beyond the church to the whole world. *Shrove Tuesday* is observed with a Parish pancake festival and service of "Alleluia Farewell." This feast, with games and *high Jinks*, serves as a backdrop to emphasize the solemnity of *Ash Wednesday* on the following day.

At services during this day, Parishioners bring the palms which they received on Palm Sunday to the church, where they are burned, symbolizing our unfaithfulness to our pledges of loyalty to Christ as King. We receive marks from the ashes upon our foreheads to wear in the streets as a sign of our repentance and of our entering into preparation for Easter.

During *Lent* special emphasis is placed upon prayer and Bible study. Lent is climaxed at Holy Week with the distribution of palms and a joyful procession through the church and through the streets as part of the Palm Sunday service. Holy Thursday is observed with a fellowship-sacrificial supper of bread, cheese, and wine. After a symbolic foot-washing ceremony, Communion is celebrated around the table followed by *Tenebrae*. Many people attend the three-hour Watch Service on Good Friday, in which a number of lay people participate. A high point in the Holy Week observance is the presentation of a Passion Play on Good Friday evening. If weather permits, this play is given on a platform in the street. Many who never attend church at all are exposed to the Passion story and the spirit of Lent.

Easter Day begins with a caravan to a public park for a sunrise service, followed by a breakfast and the Easter festival service on Easter Sunday morning. During Eastertide we observe Family Life Sunday on the first Sunday in May, with a service of Holy Communion during which loaves of bread are distributed to each family represented at the service. The loaves are to be broken at the family table as a sign of Christ's redeeming presence in every household. Pentecost is celebrated by a united service of our several churches as the birthday of the Christian Church and the feast of the Holy Spirit.

In the fall of the year, World Wide Communion and Thanksgiving Day are occasions for special services of worship. The churches are decorated during the year with colors appropriate to the church season. Window displays and decorations, sometimes on the outside of the church buildings, tell all who pass by something about what the church is celebrating. In the lectionaries and sometimes in special publications suggestions are given to families of the Parish about ways these occasions can be observed in their own homes. As we have come to know the people of our Parish and to minister to growing church schools and congregations, we have had to examine the question of family worship practices. We encourage services of blessing of the home when a family moves into a new apartment. We encourage the use of worship centers such as those we have in our own homes. The children in church schools make crosses and candlesticks for use in their homes. The ministers in pastoral calling encourage periodic gatherings of the whole family for a service of worship in their home as a family. We try to make available, through the church, religious pictures and other Christian symbols appropriate for use in the home.

Very important in the development of the practice of Christian family worship has been our Parish retreat center near Peekskill, New York. During the summer we hold Christian family life camps at the retreat center where whole families consider and practice together the

meaning of Christian family life. We have felt the role of the retreat center to be a very important asset to the sustenance of the worship life in an urban parish. The retreats for our Parishioners held at this center on weekends throughout the year bring alive an awareness of God's wonders in nature and make possible some withdrawal from the pressures of city life—for a time of meditation and of Christian fellowship in orderly surroundings.

V

Finally, I must say some word about the worship and the Christian action of our Parish. The worshipping congregation of Christians becomes a center of meaning for the place where it is set. As it listens and hears God's Word, the Church seeks to speak as plainly as possible the Word of Judgment against those ways which violate God's Will. "Thus saith the Lord! This is wrong. This must not be. These ways bring death and destruction to everything that is good in human life!"

As it listens and hears God's Word the Church seeks to use the power God has given it to heal, reconcile, redeem, and give new Life.

In our own Parish, a Thursday night "Christian Action" meeting has been a time of listening for God's Word in our common life. We seek to find ways to make God's judgment heard and felt, and we seek ways that we can work to bring about healing where there is sickness, wholeness where there is brokenness, justice where there is injustice, Life where there is death.

In this kind of congregational life, the fellowship is not geared to building up its life. Rather, life is constantly being broken open and poured out into the breaches of the community outside the church. To do this, a congregation must live in the common Faith in God's sure victory over all the apparent power of death and the devil.

Because of our common experience together in our worship, worship becomes the natural context within which we act in the community. Our liturgical expression is the expression of our feeling in the midst of action. Before conducting a survey of housing violations, we gather on the corner of a block to invoke the blessing of the Trinity, to offer to God our work, and to lift before Him in intercession the needs of the people in the tenement block. In a gathering of people to wait upon a landlord violating the building code, the Kyrié and the songs of assurance of God's victory over evil become expressions of the feeling of the occasion. At a meeting between teen-agers and police concerning their juvenile delinquency, the confession "We have done many wrongs and have made many mistakes. Our hearts are not right. We have not done those things which we ought to have done, and we have done

those things which we out not to have done," and the Kyrié was said in a loud voice by the teen-agers who have said these words many times in services of worship at the church.

VI

As the foregoing indicates, ways of worship in our parish have grown and developed as ministers and people have matured in faith and Christian experience and as our growing life as a congregation has been exposed to the many ways God has been at work in our troubled neighborhood.

I have neglected to describe some aspects of our parish life related to worship. A program of Sunday evening "youth worship" growing out of youth canteens, detached work among street clubs, and church membership classes for youth; a program of training in worship for children in our church schools including the learning of hymns, scriptures, and traditional prayers and responses; and our experiences with outdoor drama and worship on streets and vacant lots have not been described. I hope, however, that I have been able to give a picture of some of the ways worship has become an expression of the meaning God has for our life as a people of God in this urban parish.

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Book Reviews

THE GOSPELS: THEIR ORIGIN AND GROWTH, BY FREDERICK C. GRANT. *New York, Harper & Brothers, 1957. 224 pp., $3.75.*

As one reads a book with the scope and comprehensiveness of this one he is impressed anew with the fact that there is no substitute for experience in providing perspective on complex questions. Professor Grant's long and fruitful years as teacher, writer, and painstaking student of the New Testament and its world are the necessary prerequisites for writing a handbook on the critical study of the gospels with the sweep and depth of this one. He refers to the predecessor of this work, *The Growth of the Gospels,* which was published in 1933, as a "war casualty," and modestly adds that the necessity to melt down its plates for metal resulted in "no great loss," since the movement of research since the 1930's demands a fresh statement. At any rate, we are grateful that Dr. Grant has provided us with this up-to-the-minute survey—not just of what others have thought about the gospels, but of what the author himself has come to conclude in the mature years of his New Testament research.

The first six chapters deal with the changes in method of approach to the gospels which have taken place in the past fifty years, and show in detail how these newer methods put the gospels in a different light. Here the main thesis is the familiar one that the gospels are the church's books, produced out of its own life, addressed to its own didactic, theological, liturgical and kerygmatic needs. As one reviews this survey of changing approach, he cannot fail to note how much Dr. Grant's own researches have contributed to the development, and how his efforts in introducing form criticism to American readers helped to hasten the adoption of the form-critical approach in this country.

The remaining six chapters treat the four gospels separately, and in their interrelationships actual or alleged. Here Professor Grant not only makes his way judiciously through the mass of critical theories about the origins, structure and interdependence of the gospels, but, having mastered this material, he welds it together into a synthesis which is very much his own and which bears the stamp of his own special interests. The book concludes with detailed outlines of the four gospels and Acts, together with a useful selected bibliography of critical works and commentaries on these books. As a concise (less than 200 pages of text) statement of the present state of critical study of the gospels, Dr. Grant's book is without peer.

In addition to the over-all assumption that the gospels are the church's books, there are several themes which recur throughout the book. One of these is Dr. Grant's reconstruction of Q, together with the place which he believes it played as a source behind Mark as well as the other two synoptics. On this point, however, there is a lack of clarity since Q is at times treated as

a document of definite extent (p. 59, 60) lying behind all three of the synoptics; at times as material common to Matthew and Luke but not found in Mark (p. 44); and at other times as a collection of sayings in the *oral* tradition (p. 115). Another common factor throughout the book is the conviction that John and the synoptics represent quite independent traditions, that John did not use the synoptics, and that John was not written to supplement or correct the synoptics. Dr. Grant's wide knowledge of the Hellenistic religions illuminates his treatment of the Gospel of John.

Perhaps the most surprising feature of the book is the relatively narrow influence exerted by the form-critical method. The reader receives the clear impression that Dr. Grant is much more interested in literary analysis of the books *as they stand*, than in exploring the pre-literary stage of the gospel materials. Accordingly, the work of men like T. W. Manson on the sayings of Jesus, or of J. Jeremias on the parables does not concern the author. Even the details of the work of Dibelius, Bultmann, Taylor, Albertz, etc. are given only in partial or summary fashion, if at all. The work of K. L. Schmidt on the framework of the Markan narrative does not figure in the discussion, although from the standpoint of many younger scholars, Schmidt's work has had far-reaching consequences, in that it sought to demonstrate the complete artificiality of the Markan chronology. The swing of the pendulum in recent years in the direction of attempting a reconstruction of the pattern of Jesus' ministry is a development in gospel studies that might have been mentioned.

Both Professor Grant and his publisher are to be congratulated on their escape from the temptation to "cash in" on the current popularity of the Dead Sea Scrolls by suggesting that this book had to be re-written in the light of the Qumran discoveries. The author demonstrates commendable reserve in refusing to shift his date of the Fourth Gospel—as some have insisted must be done—because of a few parallels in terminology between John and some of the Scrolls. In a work as comprehensive as this one, however, it is surprising to find no reference to the important work of K. Stendahl on the scripture quotations from Matthew in the light of the Qumran commentaries (Stendahl, Krister, *The Schools of St. Matthew*, Uppsala, 1954), especially since so many of Stendahl's assumptions about Matthew correspond with Dr. Grant's own. In the light of his discussion of the "testimonies" used by the gospel writers, one might have expected a reference to the discovery of such collections of proof-texts at Qumran.

In a work of this scope, nearly every reader will find details like these with which he will take issue, or will think of additional material he would like to have seen included. But this will be a rewarding book for the student who is just launching out into the critical study of the gospels, for the older hand who wants to know where the study of the gospels has moved in the last thirty years or so, and for the specialist who knows that it is important to come to terms with the ripe judgments on these matters of such a distinguished scholar as Frederick C. Grant.

HOWARD CLARK KEE

THE DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY, BY CYRIL C. RICHARDSON. *Nashville, Abingdon Press, 1958. 159 pp., $3.00.*

When a distinguished and competent Church historian writes a book the conclusion of which is that "there is no necessary threeness in the Godhead," it behooves all traditional theologians to give the thesis their serious attention. The author's purpose is not to attack Trinitarian theology from a Unitarian

or sectarian point of view but to wrestle honestly with the history of dogma and Christian thought from within responsibility to that history and to question all Trinitarian formulations. In the main he accepts what is said about God in the major types of Trinitarian theology but rejects the attempt to say the truth in Trinitarian symbols. After an introductory chapter stating his questioning stance and a chapter describing the problem as he sees it, Dr. Richardson begins with the New Testament and then uses a typology of Trinitarian thought to describe and criticize the dogma and its doctrinal expositions. The Trinity has been used unsuccessfully, he thinks, to resolve real problems of the relation of God in his transcendent aseity to God in his relatedness to his creation. *The Trinity of Mediation* fails, however, to solve an insoluble paradox which it forces artificially into the categories, *Father, Son* and *Spirit,* which were originally alien to the discussion of the problem. *The Trinity of Love* rightly understands that God must be at one and the same time self-sufficient love and lover of his creation and that both proper self-love and the mutuality of love among persons are relevant analogies. But neither of these truths is properly stated in Trinitarian terms. Furthermore it is not possible to maintain that a love relationship (the Spirit) is a person (in any sense of *hypostasis* or *persona*) in the same way that Father and Son are so described (Chapter VI, *The Spirit and the Trinity of Love*). This same difficulty applies to the Spirit in the other types of Trinitarian thought.

In a critical analysis of the approach to the Trinity through the nature of revelation (Sabellius, Schleiermacher and Claude Welch) and through the nature of the divine activity (Dorothy Sayers), Dr. Richardson finds essentially the same difficulties. True paradoxes are described but partially concealed by arbitrarily forcing them into the irrelevant three-foldness of the Trinity.

The book closes with an effort to state the meaning of the symbols *Father, Son* and *Spirit* and there is *A Christological Note* and an excellent bibliography.

Dr. Richardson's point-of-view may be stated without too much simplification in the following way. *Father* is a Biblical symbol which describes God both in his self-sufficient otherness and in his relation to creation (self-mediation, love, revelation and activity). *Father* describes God as creator, giver of our vocations, adopter of us as sons, loving parent, disciplinarian and especially Father of the perfect son, Jesus.

"When we say 'Son' we refer to this relation between the heavenly Father and Jesus of Nazareth. It is a relation *within the terms of the incarnation.* It is not a term of dependence, fittingly read back into the Godhead itself." (p. 144) Presumably then "the Incarnation" is the incarnation of the Father in the human Son.

"The Spirit is . . . God in his dynamic action, and particularly as imparting himself to us." (p. 145) This symbol "overlaps that of the 'Son'. It is by God's Spirit that Jesus fulfills the role he does in the world's redemption; just as it is by his Spirit that God is made known to us as Father." (p. 145) Presumably *Spirit* also "overlaps" *Father* although this is not said.

The Church was launched on its way toward the error of the doctrine of the Trinity by St. Paul, who read the Sonship of the man Jesus back into "the form of God." This mythical Son was identified by St. John with the Logos and paved the way for the Apologists and others to use the Trinity as an artificial structure for discussing and seeking to describe the many antinomies present in the Christian encounter with, and reception of, God. The Church, therefore, should start afresh, stating and not trying to resolve the paradoxical affirmations which it must make about deity and about God's presence

and action in Jesus of Nazareth. Father, Son and Holy Spirit are "ways of thinking about God from different points of view" (p. 145) not distinctions in deity, and the real distinctions which are to be made in deity have no direct relationship to these symbols or to threeness of any kind.

In critical comment on this thesis, four things may be said. First, while the Synoptic Gospels and Acts may contain primitive sources which come from a time when the Church held a Father and Son (meaning only the historical man) theology, the New Testament as it stands is far on its way to the alleged Pauline-Johannine error. As Mark 2:10 and the Lucan and Matthean parallels show, the Synoptics themselves are involved in "the Son of Man" myth. Further, it is inaccurate to describe the New Testament symbols as "overlapping." The New Testament is quite clear that the Father sends Sonship from within deity into created, historical existence by the Spirit. The Pauline phrase "The Spirit of Sonship" (Romans 8:15) as well as St. Paul's use of "the Spirit of Christ" as synonymous with "the Spirit of God" in the same chapter show that this is not "overlapping." The overlapping does come in post-New Testament thought between *Logos* and *Son-Spirit* theology but the Church's recognition of this is evident in the fact that Logos is used doctrinally but never dogmatically. Logos became a term in exposition of the cosmic aspect of the Son which no longer "overlapped" Spirit. Still further, the direction toward Trinitarian thought is carried very far by Johannine theology including a kind of doctrine of *perichoresis* and of *appropiations* (Jn. 14:23-26, 15:26-27, 16:13-15). Dr. Richardson, therefore, proposes a meaning for the three New Testament symbols which goes completely behind the New Testament.

Secondly, the affirmation constantly made that we must accept the transcendent absoluteness of God and his relatedness to Creation as a paradox in which neither mode of being is symbolically prior or derived is simply not intelligible to the reviewer. The absolute and equal deity of the Son, affirmed in the struggle against all Arian-like Christology, can never overcome the truth of the Logos' subordination to the Unconditioned or of the Son's symbolic "begottenness". The Spirit's symbolic "procession" is not overcome by the deity of the Spirit. Although there is a restive and antinomic character about all Trinitarian thought, it is only Dr. Richardson's dogma—that God's *aseity* and his forthgoingness stand in no relationship to each other except as modes of being of the one deity—that makes it irrelevant to use Father-Son or Theos-Logos terms to illumine the discussion. In a certain sense God's transcendent self-sufficiency and his relatedness to creation belong to Father, Son and Spirit; but it is not necessary to maintain that because each "person" does something "in his own way" (Barth) this makes distinctions in the external operations of the Trinity. If the Father and the Son make their abode with the disciple by the Spirit, this is one external operation, but it does not follow that the three are indistinguishable (Jn. 14:23).

Thirdly, although the *person* character of the Spirit has never been established with the same force as that of the Father and the Son and although Trinitarian thought moves always between modalistic monarchianism and social Trinitarianism, it is not evident that this means that we must abandon both the dogma and the effort to give it doctrinal expression. Dr. Richardson has shown that no final doctrine of the Trinity has been achieved so adequately that a doctrine may become dogma, and he has shown that some doctrinal expositions are less adequate than others, but he has not convinced the reviewer that the whole direction and effort is an artificial and misguided movement.

Fourthly and lastly, it seems only fair

for the reviewer to indicate his 'viewpoint'. As an interpretation of the New Testament it belongs to the same type as Lionel Thornton's which Dr. Richardson criticizes on page 52. To see the New Testament as distinguishing between the Spirit on the one hand as "the agent of revelation" (I Cor. 2) and as "the quickening cause" (Rom. 8:11), and the Son on the other hand as "the objective ground of salvation" and "the content of the quickened life," is not "sophistical and artificial" and may go with either a modalistic or a social doctrine of the Trinity. Both St. Paul and St. John seem quite clear and unambiguous about this distinction and both seem clear about the Spirit being the Son's other self (Romans 8:27 and 34, Jn. 15:26, 16:14). Theologically this belongs generally to the type represented by Barth and Dorothy Sayers. Theology like politics makes strange alliances. A. T. MOLLEGEN

THE NATURE OF THE UNITY WE SEEK: Official Report of the North American Conference on Faith and Order, September 3-10, 1957, Oberlin, Ohio, ED. BY PAUL S. MINEAR. *St. Louis, The Bethany Press, 1958. 304 pp., $4.00.*

When it was first announced that the North American Conference of the Faith and Order Movement was to focus upon "The Nature of the Unity We Seek," many ecumenical veterans heaved sighs of satisfaction and anticipation. At long last, ecumenical theologians were to give attention to the topic which should precede all others. For it is obvious that any discussion of Christian Unity must risk diffusion, inconclusiveness, and futility unless it be held within the bounds of agreement as to the ultimate objective sought. As far back as the Edinburgh Conference of 1937, one of the preparatory volumes declared:

> "All Christians agree that 'God wills Unity'— in some sense of the word. Every society laying claim to the name 'Church' holds that the Church is by nature a unity—in some sense of the word. But disunity reveals itself when each seeks to unfold the sense of the word."

Almost every subsequent ecumenical discussion has echoed the injunction: "This is a matter requiring further study." But heretofore, Faith and Order inquiries have been preoccupied with the imperatives to unity, the Biblical authority for unity, the existential facts of division, the theological obstacles to unity, the historical and cultural sources of disunion. They have exposed whence we have come and where we are; they have almost wholly by-passed the normative definition of goal, of whither we should seek to go.

It was especially appropriate that this pioneering inquiry should be undertaken in a North American context. For the heart of the problem is how to reconcile unity with diversity, how

to safeguard and conserve valid differences within a larger whole. And nowhere else are the varieties of ecclesiastical tradition and expression to be found in such profusion and relative strength as in the United States.

No previous Faith and Order conference has been conceived so comprehensively, prepared so thoroughly, or executed more competently. Its background, its setting, its procedures, and its accomplishments are set forth in the brilliant and moving introduction to this report-volume by the man who was entrusted with its direction and was its principal architect, Professor Paul S. Minear. Whatever more in these 300 close-packed pages may claim attention, this masterly essay on "The Conference in Context" is under no circumstances to be overlooked by any serious student of Ecumenical Christianity. It was early discovered that there could be no satisfactory examination of the central concern without attention to a host of related themes. No fewer than "eighteen important problem areas" were defined; these were organized ultimately into twelve topics, arranged in three major divisions. In accordance with traditional conference procedures, the delegates were divided among twelve "Sections"; their reports were received but not discussed by the full conference. In contrast, the documents of the three encompassing "Divisions" received plenary examination and approval.

All who shared in the week's sessions at Oberlin last September testify to an exciting, illuminating, and inspiring ecumenical experience. By common acknowledgment, the major addresses were at an exceptionally high level. These are reproduced in full, and thus can make invaluable contributions to the wider advance of ecumenical thought. The volume in its entirety is a model of wise planning and skilled editing. It will take its place among the most valuable titles in the steadily lengthening sheld of basic ecumenical sources.

In important respects, Oberlin broke fresh ground. Probably the most noteworthy was the focussing of attention upon "local ecumenicity" in congregations and communities, and upon city and state Councils of Churches as its agents—or, more accurately, upon "the nearness of the local and the global," "the interpenetration of universality and locality." If this Conference proves successful in quickening an awareness of the scandal of Christian division, duplication, and competition at the grassroots, and in stimulating not merely study of ecumenical issues in parishes but also achievement of ecumenical collaboration and even union between parishes, it will have gone far to dispel the miasma of unreality and covert insincerity which heretofore has vitiated much Faith and Order discussion.

With full recognition of the values of the Oberlin meeting, one grave failure must be acknowledged, indeed underscored. One may search the 300 pages of its findings without gaining a single new ray of light on the topic it met to illumine—"the nature of the unity we seek." This failure was foredoomed in the scheme of the Conference. It fell victim to the all too familiar temptation of allowing attention to be so dispersed among unnumbered important but secondary issues that no Division or even Section appears to have wrestled systematically, incisively, and decisively with the one issue which furnished its *raison d'etre*. The first Division confesses, "We are not unified in our understanding of the unity we seek." And the next Section, listing "areas in which further agreement needs to be reached before we can move toward closer oneness," names as the final area "the nature of the unity we seek." Ecumenical veterans will continue to cherish the hope, now further dimmed, that in some undated future,

Faith and Order inquiry will concentrate resolutely upon this one question which is prerequisite to everything else.

HENRY P. VAN DUSEN

ECUMENISM AND THE EVANGELICAL, BY J. MARCELLUS KIK. *Philadelphia, The Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, 1958. 152 pp., $3.50.*

It is widely recognized that the most commanding challenge to ecumenical Protestants comes today not from paganism or non-Christian faiths or Roman Catholicism, but from fellow-Protestants outside the ecumenical fellowship. The indifference of some of these groups to numerical computations, the unreliability of the figures of others, together with the rapidity of their multiplication makes accurate statistical comparison difficult. But on at least one Continent, South America, they appear to outnumber adherents of historic Protestantism from six to twelve times. It seems probable that all over the world they are increasing far more rapidly than the traditional Protestant bodies. I have elsewhere ventured to suggest that what is taking place is the emergence of a third major division of Christendom alongside Catholicism, whether Eastern or Roman, and classic Protestantism.

Most frequently referred to as "the sects" (a term of lofty historic associations since almost all branches of Protestants were originally sects), dismissed disparagingly by their critics as "the fringe sects," these bodies usually claim the name "Evangelicals."

This volume is one of the first and possibly the most temperate examination of the ecumenical movement by a spokesman for this development. The author frankly disavows the more extreme apocalypticism of many fellow-Evangelicals. With engaging candor, he confesses that "alas, no segment within the visible church has greater reputation for disunity than the evangelicals." And he brings his discussion to climax upon his vision of "The Coming Great Church."

It is regrettable that a study of ecumenicity in many ways so sincere and sympathetic should be so ill-informed. There are occasional references to official ecumenical statements. But for the most part, the position he is subjecting to critical scrutiny is identified through the writings of three men who are repeatedly quoted as though they were recognized spokesmen—Dr. Charles Clayton Morrison, Dr. John Knox, and Bishop Lesslie Newbigin—only the last of whom is presently an active participant in the Ecumenical Movement.

Because of this grave weakness, the book is less useful in what it has to say about Ecumenism than in what it reveals of Evangelicalism. Nevertheless, it is perhaps the best brief introduction to what "Evangelicals" believe and think, especially about other Protestants.

HENRY P. VAN DUSEN

THE SPIRIT OF AMERICAN CHRISTIANITY, BY RONALD E. OSBORN. *New York, Harper & Brothers, 1958. 241 pp., $3.75.*

This presentation of "the peculiar characteristics of Christianity in the United States" grew out of lectures given in Europe. It takes its place in a line of significant books interpreting American Christianity to Europe: Robert Baird's *Religion in America* (1844), Willard L. Sperry's *Religion in America* (1946), and William Warren Sweet's *The American Churches, an Interpretation* (1948). Like his predecessors, Dr. Osborn devotes a great deal of attention to the freedom, the individualism, the activism, and the denominationalism of American religion; he pays greater attention to the search for unity than did his forerunners. His

analysis, which focuses chiefly on American Protestantism, is clear and sympathetic; it is perhaps even too uncritical and defensive—until the final chapter. Key sentences that summarize major themes of the book are these: "But the evidence indicates that religion, left absolutely free and without benefit of establishment, may profoundly influence the common life of a nation" (p. 51). "Here is the root of the individualism in American Christianity and the secret of much of its dynamism: that at a given moment in his experience, when confronted by a decision for or against the Son of God, the believer, overwhelmed by an awareness of the divine love, has said 'Yes' and has yielded his life to Jesus Christ as his Savior and Lord" (pp. 74 f.). "What we are beginning to realize is that God in his providence has permitted a common type of faith and life to emerge from the freedom and the denominational variegation of American Christianity. Out of separate historical traditions which find it increasingly difficult to maintain their relevance we find ourselves meeting one another with common convictions, a common sense of mission, and common methods of doing our work" (pp. 137 f.).

This book has been heralded as one which will be of particular interest to laymen, and as a fine-quality, "three-dimensional" mirror that allows us to see ourselves in perspective it will undoubtedly be of wide usefulness in the church. The author's use of hymns to illumine attitudes and moods is especially effective. No doubt students of theology will find the theological chapters, "The Sea of Faith—the Currents and the Depths," of especial concern. It reflects the writer's Disciple and southwestern orientations to some degree—a refreshing change, for many of the assessments of American theology have had a northern or eastern slant. Indeed, this reviewer, from his northeastern perspective, would feel that the current revival of Biblical theology has had a bit more general influence than is suggested here, and would want to qualify somewhat more fully the judgment that the faith of the great bulk of active church members and pastors "might be described as a liberal evangelicalism" (p. 168). It is to be hoped that both lay and clerical readers alike will persevere to the last chapter, where some penetrating criticism of American Protestantism is offered. Influenced by such writers as Riesman and Whyte—and the Hebrew prophets—Osborn makes such statements as these: "In effect, Christianity (along with Judaism) has become the prevailing cult in America, and receiving baptism may be a great deal like the ancient Roman's burning incense to Caesar—a routine act of social conformity" (p. 215). "Our so-called 'return to religion' may be only a resurgent primitivism which would silence doubt and fear with the magic of faith, invoking a divine blessing upon the American Way rather than devoutly seeking the will of the Eternal God for America" (p. 221). It would probably have made a slightly stronger book for Americans had the judgments of the last chapter been allowed to color the account earlier, but this might have made it less helpful as an interpretation of American Christianity for others.

Ronald Osborn has given us a lively picture of Protestantism in the United States: sympathetic and understanding yet not uncritical, assuring and encouraging yet also thought-provoking and disturbing.

ROBERT T. HANDY

FAITH AND ETHICS: THE THEOLOGY OF H. RICHARD NIEBUHR, ED. BY PAUL RAMSEY. *New York, Harper and Brothers, 1957. 306 pp., $5.00.*

This is a symposium composed of essays on theology and ethics by former pupils of Professor Richard Niebuhr

of the Yale Divinity School. Edited by Prof. Paul Ramsey of Princeton University, it is intended as a Festschrift in honor of a great teacher. It will be of special value to those who have not had the privilege of being his pupils but have read his books with admiration.

The book is almost evenly divided between essays on theological and essays on ethical aspects of Niebuhr's thinking. After a brief but interesting "personal appreciation" of him by Dean Liston Pope, there are two long essays by Hans Frei on his theological background and his theology. These are among the most difficult parts of the book, because they are written in a highly abstract and involved style. Frei points out the influence on Niebuhr of the particular Protestant tradition in which he stands, of the German academic tradition in nineteenth century theology, of the relativism of Troeltsch, and of the crisis theology of Barth. He sees Niebuhr's theological thinking as most deeply influenced by Barth and Troeltsch, so that "one of his major tasks is to unite a doctrine of radical monotheism and Christocentric revelation with an understanding of our life as responsible persons in an endlessly varied history." (p 64) However, most readers will find Frei's analysis of the theology of Niebuhr himself more interesting. Niebuhr is primarily a "confessional" rather than an "apologetical" theologian, says Frei, but he is profoundly interested in the relation of Christ to culture and is a "conversionist" in his view of that relation. The important question for him is not "whether a God exists" but "what being or beings have the value of deity." When this question is asked existentially, the answer is that God is personal. Niebuhr would disagree, therefore, with Tillich's view that "God is being-itself" is the only direct and non-symbolic statement we can make about God. However, he holds that we can know God only within our relation to Him, and His metaphysical attributes must be expressed as relational attributes, *e.g.* His self-being or "aseity" as His power impinging upon us. This relational view of God is combined with a religious relativism based upon the conviction that God is the only absolute. But Niebuhr's relativism differs from that of Troeltsch, since our confrontation and conversion by Christ in our "internal history" is a miracle, a unique event. This is crucial for Niebuhr, since God is known in natural religion as power and reveals Himself only in Christ as the unity of power and goodness. Frei also points out that, while Niebuhr's starting-point is with the Father rather than the Son, he has developed a definition of Christ which is based not on psychological analysis of his "self-consciousness" but on his moral purpose and virtues.

One of the other theological essays contains an interesting and subtle discussion by Carl Michalson of "the reality of the hidden God" and "the presence of the hidden God." In existentialist fashion he maintains that God is not "a theoretical possibility which one may affirm or deny" but "an existential requirement," since "the authenticity of man's life depends on God's reality." (p. 249) But his main concern is not with the reality of God but with the question whether God ever is really present. The doctrine of the hiddenness of God is a way of affirming His transcendence, His distinctness from man. But in Christ God overcomes the gulf between Himself and man and becomes present to man, so that for us He has "the value of goodness and love and faithfulness." (p. 267)

In two philosophical essays George Schrader raises some questions concerning Niebuhr's relational theory of value and Julian Hartt makes an ontological analysis of "the situation of the believer" to show that "the relativities do not exhaust the realities" in the situation and that a person is "an

actual entity which is not exhaustively constituted by its relations." (p. 227) Thus, it is obvious that at least some of Niebuhr's former pupils are not happy with his relativism. This discontent is expressed forcefully and effectively by Paul Ramsey in his essay on Niebuhr's ethics. Ramsey points out that the definition of value as "a function of being in relation to being" or as "what is fitting, useful, complementary to an existence" does not imply psychological relativism, since "good-forness" does not vary with desire. Hence, he thinks that Niebuhr's position is expressed more adequately by the words "relational" and "relatedness" than by the words "relative" and "relativism," and he holds that Niebuhr's preference for the latter pair of terms shows the influence of the "excessive contextualism" of much social philosophy and of Troeltsch's cultural or historical relativism. He believes that the "peerless contribution" of Niebuhr to Christian ethics is his emphasis upon the "transformation" or "conversion" of ethics when moral decision is centered in Christ but that this does not require ethical relativism. Despite the fact that the historical perspectives of reason are relative, it grasps something of the universal. Moreover, radical monotheism is not inconsistent with the "ordering" of one value system above another, *e.g.* a "human-centered value-system" above a "life-centered" one. Finally, it is impossible to deny "the universal and permanent validity of certain ethical principles or hierarchy of values." For example, while democracy should not be identified with Christianity, have there not been at work in it "principles concerning the good for man in society which have more than relative historical importance and which belong always to the good for man, even though, when account is taken of relative cultural factors, it may not be wise to attempt to realize them everywhere now?" (p. 168) In contrast to Ramsey, James Gustafson seems to accept Niebuhr's relativism and to make it the basis for a "contextual" interpretation of Christian ethics which subordinates "moral principles" to the analysis of particular situations. "Values and principles," he writes, "are articulated for and by persons within a general social milieu, and in a particular decision-making context." (p. 127)

Two essays on social ethics illustrate the fruitfulness of Niebuhr's ethical insights. Waldo Beach offers a "theological analysis of race relations" which is based upon Niebuhr's principles of response to God as Creator, as Judge, and as Redeemer. He points out clearly both the extent to which sociology confirms the Christian interpretation of race relations and the differences between representative sociologists and Christians with respect to the remedy. In the concluding essay, Robert Michaelsen makes use of Niebuhr's sociological and historical analyses of American Christianity to present a Christian interpretation of American history and an appeal to the Church to take more seriously its task of proclaiming the Kingdom of God and bringing all phases of our national life into harmony with the Gospel.

This is a valuable book and it should further the discussion of the fundamental issues of theology and ethics raised by Professor Niebuhr. The editor and other authors of the essays have done their teacher the high honor of taking his views seriously, either defending them and showing their fruitfulness or subjecting them to honest criticism.

GEORGE F. THOMAS

THE RESPONSIBLE CHRISTIAN, BY VICTOR OBENHAUS. *Chicago, The University of Chicago Press, 1957. 219 pp., $4.00.*

Christian social ethics has the important work of attempting to study society and its problems, and to propose possible courses of action through the use of the twin disciplines of theology and Christian ethics, and the disciplines of the social sciences. We have long needed a book that would present the insights of Christian social ethics to laymen. This is the task undertaken by Victor Obenhaus of Chicago Theological Seminary in publishing this book under a title taken from a key concept in the report of the American Assembly of the World Council of Churches, "The Responsible Society."

Dr. Obenhaus fully realizes the importance of this undertaking. "The manner in which laymen bring their faith to bear upon society's most crucial issues will test the vitality and depth of their faith." But he cannot be said to have succeeded in his aim, and the reasons for his failure are important.

First, he himself has not brought the full resources of the Christian faith into his presentation. Relying heavily on the growing body of official "ecumenical theology" found in the statements of the Assemblies of the World Council of Churches and the various conferences sponsored by our National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A., he has given a turgid and pedestrian outline of some of the major theological contributions to Christian social ethics. It is highly questionable that we possess, at this time, a sufficient body of thoughtful official statements about the responsible society to give more than a sketchy understanding of what our Christian faith has to say about society.

In addition, the author's own theological statements are woefully thin, pointing mainly to the sovereignty of God over all life and the communal nature of man as part of the human family. He distorts Paul's figure of the Body of Christ in several places, using it to describe our common membership in the family of man rather than our membership through faith in the household of God, the Church.

A second weakness of this book is the author's decision to present his material in the form of "issues" to which the Christian faith must speak and on which Christians must take action. He admits that he can only deal with a few of the "major issues in American life." The ones he chooses are: economic life, labor and industrial relations, agricultural policy, race, Communism, public and private welfare, health, church and state, civil rights, and Christian vocation.

When a book tries to cover as many issues as this, however, the obvious question is: Why not others? Dr. Obenhaus has chosen three economic issues —economic life, labor and industrial relations, and agricultural policy—but has said little about basic political issues such as political action and international relations. He has dealt with health, but not housing. He has analyzed the influence of race on American society, but not the influence of class. Any selection of issues like this is necessarily partial and distorts the extent of the Christian's responsibility for society. It would have been better if he had taken a more general survey of the Christian search for the responsible society and used pertinent material on various issues as illustrations.

Another difficulty with approaching social problems as separate "issues" is also illustrated here. The author necessarily knows more about some than others, and his treatment will vary from issue to issue. Dr. Obenhaus has given highly informative summaries of problems in labor and industrial relations, agricultural policy, race, Communism and health. He has relied heavily on World Council and National Council studies for his treatment of

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economic life, public and private welfare, and Christian vocation. His discussion of Church and state issues is little more than a summary of material already available in *Church, State and Freedom*, by Leo Pfeffer (Boston: Beacon Press, 1953). And his chapter on civil rights already begins to show signs of age, as newpaper clippings on McCarthyism begin to yellow.

A good book on the subject of the "responsible society" for laymen is greatly needed in our churches today. But it will not be written as an exegesis of the official pronouncements of ecumenical bodies or a collection of separate introductory essays on selected social and political issues. It will have to be a more unified work growing out of the total theological and social outlook of one man, like William Temple's *Christianity and Social Order* or John C. Bennett's *Christian Ethics and Social Policy*.

GEORGE D. YOUNGER

MARX MEETS CHRIST, BY FRANK WILSON PRICE. *Philadelphia, Westminster Press, 1957. 167 pp., $3.50.*

CHRISTIANITY AMONG THE RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD, BY ARNOLD TOYNBEE. *New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1957. 116 pp., $2.75.*

ON THE PHILOSOPHY OF HISTORY, BY JACQUES MARITAIN. *New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1957. 180 pp., $3.50.*

The common element in these three volumes is the theme of reflection upon problems of history from a Christian viewpoint. All three of the authors are professing Christians who are seeking to bring their faith to bear upon their understanding of history and their action in history. Beyond this, they also agree in recognizing Marxism as the most important problem for Christianity in the contemporary world. In seeking to understand Marxism they agree that

it is not only simply a successful political and economic program but a philosophy and faith, or faith-substitute. Price and Toynbee emphasize this trait more than Maritain, who sees Communism as an expression of nihilistic evil. Price seems to go furthest in his development of the religious character of Communism. In the meeting of Marx and Christ, he sees the meeting of two persons, two ideas, two systems, and climactically of two faiths.

Toynbee agrees that Marxism has religious character; indeed it is the "resurgence of another religion which is an old and a bad one, our worship of ourselves in the plural in the shape of collective human power." (vii) On one side of the Iron Curtain this worship takes the form of Nationalism. On the other it takes the form of Communism, but there is a common element, namely "man's self-centered worship of himself." Against this old and bad religion stand all the high religious teaching that "man is not the highest presence in the universe." Thus "only humanity can save man from destroying himself." (vii) Accordingly Toynbee counsels the high religions to push to one side—at least for the time being—the beliefs and practices which separate them and make common cause against this new and malignant enemy of them all and of Humanity.

Professor Maritain's book has a wider scope than Communism as its title indicates, but it does deal with this problem as an important issue of contemporary history. Maritain compares French and Russian revolutions, finding in the former at least the true principles of Liberty, Equality and Fraternity. By contrast the Russian revolution is "intrinsically rotten." (67) Communism is inherently nihilistic, appearing to Maritain as the veritable embodiment of evil.

While all three books agree in treating Marxism as a great and terrible evil, there is, at least from this reader's viewpoint, no adequate understanding of the power and success of the Communist movement. Price's book comes nearest of the three to adequacy and Maritain's is least adequate. I think it is too easy to say that Communism is vile and then to have done with it. Toynbee's lumping together of Nationalism and Communism is particularly misleading. To be sure they are both forms of idolatrous self-worship. But surely different idols must be differently understood.

In this case nationalism is a synthetic revival of tribalism, and Communism must be regarded (as writers as various as William Temple, Barbara Ward and Reinhold Niebuhr have amply shown) as a violently skewed form of the Judeo-Christian tradition. To be sure, Communist parties have mixed a great deal of nationalism into Marxism. But the power of Marxism over the hearts of men cannot be understood apart from its professed dream of Humanity and its professed indignation at injustice. It is precisely these elements which give it power, and it is these elements which it derives from the Judeo-Christian tradition. As we ponder this fact we may realize that a half truth is more dangerous than a complete falsehood, because having "more truth" it has greater plausibility. What seems needed (and what these books do not undertake) is a careful analysis of the elements of truth and falsehood in Marxism as judged from a biblical viewpoint.

Each of these books in its way is rewarding to a careful reader. Price is a Protestant missionary to China who writes from personal observation of Communism's coming to China. He writes as a devout Christian seeking to read the signs of the times. There is both an openness and a common sense which makes it a good book.

Toynbee's work is painted on a larger canvas. Against the large background of all human history and all man's religions he depicts the acute problem

of man's self-worship today. If there is any one fundamental criticism of him, it is that he doesn't understand the Hebraic mind of the Bible. Thus he regards the "jealous God" and the "chosen people" as doctrines of Hebrew conceit and vanity. This lack of understanding may be termed a major flaw of his monumental *Study of History*. A more perceptive reading of the Bible might have shown Toynbee other facets of meaning in these ideas, and might have introduced major qualifications into the terms on which he proposes that the high religions must get together today. Yet we must be grateful to Mr. Toynbee for his blunt and timely suggestion.

Maritain's book consists of lectures given at Notre Dame University and represent a development of the categories of his philosophy in such a way as to deal with history. He ranges from the axiomatic laws covering the entire historic process to specific tendencies. The Protestant reader will find emphases to question, but he will be surprised at how similar Maritain's philosophy of history is to contemporary Protestant writing on the subject. He will also be impressed with the flexibility and wisdom of Maritain's thinking.

The net significance of these books is not to solve a problem but to articulate forcefully for contemporary Christians what is probably the largest and most baffling problem we face in the contemporary world.

JOHN A. HUTCHISON

THE TWO CITIES, BY JOHN A. HUTCHISON. *Garden City, Doubleday and Company, 1957. 190 pp., $3.50.*

This book by Professor Hutchison is one in a series for laymen. In his foreward the author says, "I have not sought here to do research, or to propound new or original ideas . . ." Thus the book must be reviewed within the author's conception of its purpose, i.e. to help the Christian laity understand some of the basic patterns of Christian ethical thought. The difficulty of this task is common knowledge.

The plan of the book is the conventional historical development of Christian and secular social thought. The range is much wider than church and state, or even faith and politics; the book is crammed with information about most of the major movements and thinkers in Western social philosophy. For example, within one chapter of thirty-three pages there are sketches of Old Testament history and prophetic religion, New Testament ethics, and Greek and Roman social thought. In another of twenty-four pages there are discussions of Church and sect, Augustine's view of history, the theological and social synthesis of the Middle Ages, and Reformation ethics. In a third historical chapter Hutchison covers the Renaissance, Enlightenment thought, economic theory of the free market, secularization of politics, nationalism, and various movements of social protest. There is a plethora of information here, but it is so condensed that many laymen are likely to be baffled, and perhaps will recall little of what they have read. At times condensation leads to oversimplification, as for example in the definition of Natural Law in part as "a set of norms for social conduct . . ." Natural Law thinkers like John Wild and Maritain carefully point out that such norms are not themselves the Natural Law, though they are in part derived from it.

I would guess that chapters one and five would communicate most to the layman. Here the pace of exposition is slower, and the material is such that the lay reader will become involved personally. In the first chapter Hutchison carefully defines what a "perspective" is and how it affects one's thinking and action. Then he delineates some of the essential elements of a Christian perspective. In the fifth chapter Hutchison discusses democracy, which he de-

fines as "that system of government in which the state is made the servant of the community." One wonders if other forms of government could not also be responsible servants of the community, though the structures through which responsibility is exercised and acknowledged would be different. Incidentally, after a brief discussion of the common good in democracy, the author adds, "This statement is an attempt to give concrete social content to Kantian good will, and to Rousseau's general will." We professors are incorrigible! Intelligent comprehension of that sentence requires considerable erudition.

The last chapter is perhaps the most interesting to the academic ethicist. Here Hutchison discusses the nature of moral reasoning. He develops a diagram in which he shows how doctrines, moral imperatives, and statements of social fact come together in the definition of social norms. Out of these social norms come policy statements and guides to specific action. The discussion of this diagram and its elaboration in the text requires more than a book review. One leading question that can be posed is the relation of this moral reasoning to the objective judging and redeeming action of God in human events.

Is this the kind of book that helps the layman develop his Christian perspective, and thus brings his faith and its meaning into his political decisions? At some points I am sure the thoughtful layman will be brought to attention by what Hutchison says. Further, knowledge of the Christian tradition in ethics needs to be transmitted as much as possible. But how does one teach or evoke in others the Christian faith and insight that leads to moral responsibility in political behavior? This is the hard task that requires the best in thought and action by theologians and ministers alike. We will have to wait for "reports from the field" for judgment about whether this book fulfills its purpose.

One senses in this book the irenic spirit, yet deep concern that characterizes its author. His scope of knowledge and his thoughtfulness testify to his competence as teacher and Christian thinker.

JAMES GUSTAFSON

RELIGION AND THE CHRISTIAN FAITH, BY HENDRICK KRAEMER. *Philadelphia, Westminster Press, 1957. 461 pp., $6.00.*

Some days ago there appeared in the daily press an accont of a brief interview in this city with S. Radhakrishnan, the Vice-President of India, in which the Indian statesman, who has written much in the way of interpretation of India to the West, gave his views on the future of religion. In his opinion the religion of the future will not be any of the historic religions, certainly not Christianity, nor a religion dependng upon the "revelation" preached by any particular founder, but a natural religion arising from a synthesis of Eastern and Western religious thinking. Such a statement is sure to be warmly welcomed in certain circles, for there are many indications that similar ideas of syncretism have a peculiar appeal to the spirit of our age.

It is for this reason that Dr. Kraemer's book is so welcome as an antidote to much of the confused and "sloppy" thinking in our times about religion in general and the relation of Christianity to other religions in particular. The book is not easy reading. In part this is because of the rather involved structure of the reasoning, but in part it arises from the language. For instance, when the author speaks of "emancipation from unquestionable dogmatic thinking" it takes a second reading to realize that what is meant is "emancipation from thinking in terms of dogmas which may not be questioned," or to see that "a secret courting of theology for the gracious smile of Notre Dame Philosophy"

means "a secret courting by theology." This language problem faces the reader all through the book and demands careful reading. It is reading, however, which amply repays the effort.

The author is no foe to the study we label Comparative Religion. Indeed he is anxious to learn all it can contribute to our understanding of the non-Christian religions and the part that religion has played, for good and for ill, in the history of mankind. Nor does he depreciate the values to be gained from the discipline of Philosophy of Religion. He is rightly critical, however, of some of the assumptions made by writers on these subjects, and still more critical of many of the conclusions drawn by less instructed writers from the results of such studies. In the course of this book he has interesting and instructive criticisms of the approach and conclusions of such well-known writers as Rudolf Otto, Joachim Wach, Ernst Troeltsch, Karl Jaspers, the Jung group, Barth and Brunner, and even Paul Tillich. He includes also a devasting criticism of the mental "acrobatics" of Radhakrishnan who, as some of his fellow Indians are well aware, has serious limitations even as an interpreter of Hinduism.

Essentially this book is an expansion and elaboration of the argument set forth in his volume *The Christian Message in a Non-Christian World,* prepared in 1938 for the Tambaram Conference. The argument is really quite simple. As Christians we take our stand on the fact that the ultimate self-revelation of God is in Jesus Christ, and that only "in Christ" does man come to a saving knowledge of God. It is this which makes us Christians and cannot but be decisive for the attitude Christians take towards the adherents of other religions. Biblical teaching is quite clear. Man by searching cannot find out God. By his own efforts man cannot restore what was lost through sin. The "original sin" of man is that of acting on the notion "ye shall be as god." It is not man who by his religious striving works through to God, but God Who, as an act of grace, reveals Himself to man, and the final act of His self-revelation is in Christ. By faith we appropriate that act of grace, and so by grace we are saved through faith. This does not mean that God's only act of grace is in Christ, for Biblical teaching is that He still may work graciously in the hearts of even those who are in revolt against Him. Yet this is no ground for thinking that the non-Christian religions may, without further question, be treated as cases of *preparatio evangelica,* and it is refreshing to read the sharp yet kindly criticism in this book of those well-meant but sadly futile efforts at "reconciliation" among the major religions, by suppressing what is really distinctive in each and assuming that there is a real possibility of unity in what they seem to have in common.

It might be a salutary thing if this book were required reading for all theological students both in the East and the West.

ARTHUR JEFFERY

REALITY, REASON AND RELIGION, BY ARTHUR A. VOGEL. *New York, Morehouse-Gorham, 1957. 208 pp., $3.00.*

Under this rather ambitious title, Father Vogel, Professor of Apologetics at Nashotah House, has attempted a restatement of some theological issues from a Neo-Thomist point of view. After an introductory chapter on Aristotelian categories, he plunges into an enlarged discussion of the problem of causation, which forms the major part of the book. Various positivistic theories are expounded and rejected in the interests of generic metaphysical causality. But it is admitted that our specific knowledge can only be probable (p. 128).

Some religious implications are then examined. Analogical prediction is dealt with, and reference is made to the ontological argument. This is treated in its most innocuous form as a variant of the cosmological argument. God and free will are then discussed with the conclusion "that we should not expect conceptually to understand how God efficaciously sustains, causes and actualises free will" (p. 175). Similarly with God's foreknowledge we must be content to recognize that "God in some manner knows us not only as we are now, but as we will be." But "conceptually, of course, we cannot explain the relation of our temporal being to God's knowledge of us in the eternal now." Temporal questions of God's foreknowledge are not legitimate, since God transcends time (p. 179).

The final chapter, "The Dead God," is an attack on Tillich's understanding of the *actus purus*, and an attempt to argue that this term really means "dynamic fullness and activity, not static emptiness and quiescence" (p. 200). The essence of the argument here is that we can properly attribute to God in an eminent and analogical way the "'unmixed,' positive aspect of the act of existence which we experience" (p. 200).

Fr. Vogel writes with a somewhat graceless style and his book is lacking in balance of subject matter. Nonetheless, his argument is not without cogency, and those interested in a Neo-Thomist viewpoint will find his book useful.

Like all Thomists the author has a horror of contradiction and paradox. Wherever a problem appears insoluble he finds refuge in the idea that we cannot conceptualize the truth, due to the limitations of our ways of thinking. But he will never admit that these limitations force us to state necessary antinomies. Rather does he try to avoid these by tricks of language. The weakness of this manner of argument is that it obscures the real contradiction involved. Verbiage darkens clarity of thought.

Three examples will suffice to bring this out.

The *actus purus*, the author argues, involves the dual concepts of God's immutability and his dynamic activity. How can they be related? He answers, "The immutability of God is one of not ceasing to exercise an infinite, unlimited existential act, rather than an immutability of important formalism" (p. 200). But does this not mean that God's immutability lies in his being infinitely involved in change? Is there not implied the hidden contradiction that God is immutable mutability? And would it not be preferable to state this paradoxically, rather than to claim no contradiction is involved?

Again, in attacking Tillich for introducing the principle of nonbeing into the Godhead, Father Vogel does not appreciate why this is necessary to guard God's dynamic character. He argues that the "unmixed" positive aspect of the act of existence can analogically be predicted of God. But he fails to see that once it is *unmixed*, it has lost its dynamic element. God is no longer the living God. What the author is saying in a roundabout way is that God is undynamically dynamic; and he then bids us believe this is not a contradiction.

Finally, the necessity of attributing motion to God, in the classic doctrine of the Trinity, produces the following statement: "The simplicity of God, of course, prevents His moving Himself in any sense without violating the principle of contradiction. But as that whose nature it is to exist *a se*, so His thinking and willing will be seen to evidence the same perfection and sufficieney as His existence. In God thinking and willing *need* no actualization, they simply *are* in the actualized state" (p. 201). Cleared of its verbiage, this means God is motionless mo-

tion. If He thinks and wills, the simplicity of the divine essence is compromised. Is it not better to admit the contradiction, rather than to becloud it and pretend it is not there?

CYRIL C. RICHARDSON

BUDDHA AND BUDDHISM, BY MAURICE PERCHERON.

MASTER ECKHART AND THE RHINELAND MYSTICS, BY JEANNE ANCELET-HUSTACHE.

SAINT AUGUSTINE AND HIS INFLUENCE THROUGH THE AGES, BY HENRI MARROU.

SAINT PAUL AND THE MYSTERY OF CHRIST, BY CLAUDE TRESMONTANT.

"MEN OF WISDOM" SERIES, *New York, Harper Torchbooks, and London, Longmans, 1958. 191 pp., $1.35 per volume.*

The publication in English of four titles in the French series "*Maîtres Spirituels*" (Paris: *Éditions du Seuil*) may turn out to be something of a landmark in American paperbacks. Their attractive format, including maps, chronological charts, and roughly forty illustrations apiece, is matched by the learning and lucidity of their authors. They present each "man of wisdom" in the context of his life and time, yet without allowing merely historical factors to prejudice the integrity of his thought. Their abundant use of original sources is both judicious and illuminating. Sympathetic, yet also critical, the series is a refreshing reminder that an "introductory" book need not be either superficial or dull.

In his *Buddha and Buddhism,* Maurice Percheron reduces the staggering vastness of Buddhist history and literature to manageable proportions, yet with no loss of accuracy. In less than 200 pages, he includes information seldom found in standard, larger volumes; for example, the symbolic significance of the various postures in Buddhist sculpture. Henri Marrou is equally successful in distilling the principal contributions of St. Augustine from the unruly corpus of his writings. For example, he brings together all the passages which anticipate the *cogito* of Descartes. Himself a staunch platonist, the author is especially sensitive to the incalculable impact of Augustinian platonism on the development of Western thought. Jeanne Ancelet-Hustache, in her treatment of Meister Eckhardt and the Rhineland mystics, is confronted with the task of speaking consistently about authors who are notoriously inconsistent, and of stressing the orthodoxy of men whose writings the Church has often regarded with suspicion. The frankness with which she adduces citations serves as a kind of "negative witness" against her thesis, and also enhances the reader's understanding of the decisive role of mysticism in the making of the Germanic mind, both past and present.

I am grateful to the editors for asking me to devote most of this review to *St. Paul and the Mystery of Christ,* by Claude Tresmontant, whose books I have admired since Professor Terrien first introduced me to them. The thesis of this creative Roman Catholic author, developed more fully in his *Essai sur la Pensée Hébraïque and Études de Métaphysique Biblique,* is, first, that the meaning of the Bible will vary according to the metaphysical presuppositions of the interpreter, but, second, that it is nevertheless possible to discriminate among rival interpretations. For the Bible contains, by implication, a definite metaphysic of its own, with answers to such philosophical questions as the nature of reality, the nature of man, ethics, and epistemology.

Because of its failure to recognize this biblical metaphysic, Christian theology, both Roman Catholic and Protestant, has often missed the full

import of the Bible. While the former has tailored scripture to accommodate an Aristotelian metaphysic, the latter's mistake has been more subtle. In its effort to recover the original purity of the gospel, Reformation theology sought to divest it of every trace of metaphysics. This uncritical approach, however, only rendered it the more vulnerable to infiltration by an unbiblical metaphysic. Consequently, and quite contrary to its own intent, the Protestant gospel has not always reflected the original meaning of the evangelists so much as a philosophy whose ultimate source is gnosticism. The prerequisite of a truly biblical theology, the author contends, is not the elimination of metaphysics, but a full articulation of the biblical metaphysic. Becoming a Christian does not require submission to Jewish ritual, but it does entail the exchange of pagan for Hebraic categories of thought.

This biblical frame of reference provides the clue to a consistent interpretation of St. Paul: "It must never be forgotten that he was a converted rabbi . . . Paul's thought is clear once we have grasped the meaning of his ideas in their biblical setting (the fundamental character of his thought and language is essentially that of the Old Testament); when, too, we have rid his thought of the burden that scholastics (notably Lutheran scholastics) have imposed on his words." The heart of Paul's theology is no dialectical analysis of the relative merits of faith and works. It might better be called a "teleology." Written in the form of typical, rabbinical commentaries on the Old Testament, his epistles contain a detailed exposition of God's master plan for the whole creation. Surveying the successive stages of this plan as they unfold in the history of Israel, Paul articulates them into a grand strategy of magnificent proportions, which reaches its astonishing, though fitting, climax in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus.

Seen in this context, Paul's otherwise confusing attitude toward the "works of the law" becomes consistent. When he speaks of the law as abolished, he means its *ritual* aspects. The remainder, the "moral" part of the law, though it can never of itself engender a transformed heart, is still necessary as a means to that end. The mistake of the Jews was to regard it as a *sufficient* means, or even as an end in itself. The true function of the *torah* in God's economy, for the Christian as well as for the ancient Hebrews, is to foster and nurture the "love of God shed abroad in our hearts."

The great advantage of this approach to the Bible through its own metaphysic is that one is no longer obliged to excise or suppress whole passages of scriptures in the interest of a preconceived dogma. For example, Tresmontant is not led by his method into the tortuous exegesis which would subordinate faith to love, nor to discover an imagined cleavage between the epistles of Paul and James. To mention a more significant controversy, he is well aware that what he has said amounts to synergism. His reply is simply that the idea of man's cooperating with God is integral to the entire Bible, including St. Paul, who after all speaks of Christians as "co-workers" with God. The burden of proof lies with those who reject synergism while still claiming to be biblical.

Actually, Tresmontant's interpretation of the Bible, and of Paul in particular, does not conflict with that of many contemporary Protestant scholars. What distinguishes his thought is the development of the full metaphysical implications of their work. His writings are therefore not so much a challenge to Protestant exegetes as to Protestant theologians. As his books continue to appear in English, it will be interesting to note how his metaphysical

proposals are received. If they are examined on their merits, then the so-called "Protestant principle" will indeed prove to be a source of continuing self-correction. But if they are dismissed as simply a "Roman Catholic point of view", then the "Protestant principle" will turn out to be merely a divinely sanctioned relativism which assures the believer *a priori* that he has nothing to learn.

E. LaB. CHERBONNIER

SPIRITUAL RENEWAL THROUGH PERSONAL GROUPS, ED. BY JOHN L. CASTEEL. *New York, Association Press, 1957. 220 pp., $3.50.*

Ever-larger congregations, heightened formalism in Sunday worship, abandonment of the old "midweek meeting," in thousands of churches, neglect of family prayers, increase of "clericalism" — these are the situation out of which there is growing a new and vigorous small-group movement among Protestants. Accounts by nine different authors dealing with as many parish situations are here knit together and given significant unanimity and variety by John L. Casteel, who as Field Work Director at Union Seminary knows both the problems and the potential of many a congregation and pastorate.

The "personal group" within a parish is defined as simply one whose role is "to help members come into a primary relationship with God, with other persons, and with themselves." The nine writers—of which at least six represent large congregations—sketch the history and procedures of personal groups in a widely differing set of circumstances, from small New England town churches to huge downtown cathedral-type parishes. Thus though all speak to "the lonely crowd" or even "the organization man," the variety of groups described is so great that "personal" may be indeed the only adjective which all have in common.

Dr. Casteel in his introductory chapter resists the temptation to give an exhaustive historical or psychological setting to the series. He does note the indelible Christian impulse for eye-to-eye, hand-to-hand circles of mutual concern, and points out that the mission of the book is to provide pointers as to how one enters this kind of fellowship. "House church" discoveries in England are part of the modern trend he indicates.

Then Thomas M. Steen takes up the story with an account of young-adult group life at Asbury-First Methodist Church in Rochester, where "research groups" are a significant aspect of the program. From First Presbyterian Church in Fort Wayne, John W. Meister testifies what vocational cell-groups and a shared project of writing devotional materials has done there. Harold R. Fray of Utica shows how Plymouth Congregational members there have clustered in new commitment and understanding within the many small groups which have arisen among them.

"Colonies" (geographically oriented groups of members) and retreats have been the heart of the West Haven Congregational program in Connecticut sketched by Gerald J. Jud—some 250 members having shared genuine devotional retreats of two-dozen members. A psychologist from Hamilton, Ontario, Kenneth J. Cox, tells of a cell group which began in Olivet United Church there after several members visited Kirkridge, a laity-clergy retreat center at Bangor, Pennsylvania. Fellowship groups at First Presbyterian Church in Middletown, N. Y., with prayer, study and retreat in their program, are reported upon by Howard B. Haines. Elsie P. Johnson of Winchester, New Hampshire, recounts the growth of similar circles, especially among women, in area parishes there.

One of the notable demonstrations in

suburban parish life is that described by Carl R. Smith and Robert W. Lynn at Montview Boulevard Presbyterian Church in Denver, where a wide range of personal groups is built about vocations and the goal of "a studying church." The well-known Church of the Saviour in Washington, dedicated to the small-group ideal in dramatic and effective ways, is sketched by William T. Ham. Dr. Casteel sums up the series at the end.

Because there is no "party line" here, nor any doctrinaire claim as to how parish personal groups should start or what they should be, the book is a good one to give laymen who may themselves react by forming such a circle of concern. Chapters are uneven, but the trend is clear and unified: there do exist exciting new possibilities for congregational life where ministers and laymen explore the role of personal groups among the perplexingly "successful" churches of our generation.

JOHN OLIVER NELSON

Book Review Contributors

Howard Clark Kee is Associate Professor of New Testament in Drew University Theological School . . . *A. T. Mollegen* is Professor of New Testament Languages and Literature in the Protestant Episcopal Theological Seminary in Virginia . . *Henry P. Van Dusen* is President and Roosevelt Professor of Systematic Theology . . . *Robert T. Handy* is Associate Professor of Church History . . . *George F. Thomas* is Professor of Religion in Princeton University and Guest Professor of Christian Ethics in Princeton Theological Seminary . . . *George D. Younger* is Minister of Mariners' Temple Baptist Church in New York City . . . *John A. Hutchison* is Professor of Religion in Columbia University . . . *James Gustafson* is Assistant Professor of Social Ethics in Yale University Divinity School . . . *Arthur Jeffery* is Adjunct Professor of Semitic Languages . . . *E. LaB. Cherbonnier* is Professor of Religion in Trinity College in Hartford . . . *Cyril C. Richardson* is Washburn Professor of Church History . . . *John Oliver Nelson* is Professor of Christian Vocation in Yale University Divinity School.

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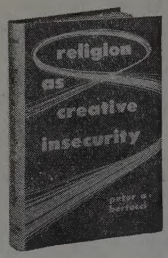

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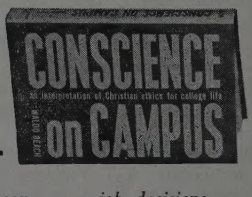

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